THE

DANGERS AND DEFENCES

OF

NEW YORK.

ADDRESSED TO THE

HON. J. B. FLOYD, SECRETARY OF WAR,

BY

MAJOR J. G. BARNARD,
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, U. S. A.

Published by order of the Chamber of Commerce
BY PERMISSION OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

NEW YORK:
D. VAN NOSTRAND.
1859.

[The accompanying report, which was called for by Gov. Seward in the Senate, not having been sent in in time for publication by that body, and having been seen by several persons interested in the safety and commerce of the port of New York, who thought it important that the information contained in it should be spread before the public, the Chamber of Commerce decided to publish it.]

UG
412
.N5
B26

Gen. Lit.
Exch.
U. of M. Transportation Library
10-17-1934

New York, January 27th, 1859.

The Honorable J. B. Floyd,
Secretary of War.

Sir,—In accordance with the permission kindly given me, as the Engineer Officer in charge of an important portion of the Defences of New York, to communicate my views to you in writing, on this most momentous theme, I submit to you the following pages, trusting that its intrinsic interest and the variety of topics I have found it necessary to treat, will be my apology for the unexpected volume to which they have swollen.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your most obedient,

J. G. BARNARD,
Major of Engineers.

THE

DANGERS AND DEFENCES OF NEW YORK.

PART I.

In a paper prepared nearly a year ago, but which, from circumstances unnecessary here to explain, has not yet gone out of my possession, I used the following language, which will now answer my purpose as a brief sketch of what I consider to be the "dangers" to which New York is exposed, and as an introduction to what I shall say as to the *defences* required.

"* * * It seems to me proper to allude to the "entire change in the nature of the problem to be considered in "the defence of this city, since the system under which the exist-"ing works have been constructed, was adopted—or rather, since "the defence of New York, as a part of the general system of "coast defence, was decided upon by the Board of Engineers of "1816."

"As late as 1840, I find the Chief Engineer, in describing the "then existing works at the Narrows, (viz: the *present* Fort Ham-"ilton, Fort La Fayette, on the Long Island side, and the *old* "Forts Tompkins and Richmond, and Batteries Hudson and Mor-"ton on Staten Island) reporting that (when these old works shall "have been repaired) 'with the Narrows thus defended, and the "'works near the city in perfect order, New York might be "'regarded as pretty well protected against an attack by water "'through this passage.' And more explicitly he elsewhere states, "with regard to repairs of the old works just named on Staten "Island, 'Nothing further, indeed, being contemplated for this "'position, except the construction of a small redoubt on a com-"'manding hill a little to the southwest.' When it is borne in "mind that since the quite recent date of the Report from which "these quotations are taken (1840), there has been constructed a new

"*new* Fort Richmond, of three or four times the size of the old "work—that a large *new* work in place of Fort Tompkins has "been commenced—that a new water-battery, nearly equal to Fort "Richmond, has been recommended and planned by the present "Board of Engineers—in fact, that an enormous increase of works "has been decided to be necessary, over those thus cited by the "Chief Engineer as sufficient to render New York 'pretty well "'protected by water through this passage,' it seems to me evident "that the problem involved in this 'protection' has changed its "character."

"These remarks are not made as a criticism upon former "Boards, or the Chief Engineer, but to show that a defensive sys- "tem for New York such as is *now* demanded, has never been "contemplated as a whole, and that the problem, as it now pre- "sents itself, is a modified and enlarged one."

"It has become so, owing to the immense developments which "have been exhibited in the means of maritime attack within the "last few years, and also to the rapid growth of the city itself, "and of the nation of which it has become the commercial me- "tropolis. Indeed, the experience which the nation had had when "the defensive system of 1816 was adopted, was not such as could "prompt a system adapted to our present circumstances. While "formidable invasions of our territory had been made by land, "the small works then in existence on Governor's and Bedlow's "Islands, had proved sufficient to protect the city; and such "efforts as were made elsewhere against our maritime places, "proved how weak were the powers of attack of that day against "fortifications—how little was required to secure our sea-ports and "maritime cities. While the means of maritime attack have of "late years assumed a magnitude and formidableness not dreamed "of when our defensive system was planned, and our country has "so increased in population, wealth and military resources, that "no enemy can hope to make any impression by an invasion of "our territory,—our great maritime places like New York, have, on "the other hand, increased in even greater proportion, in every- "thing that could make them objects of attack."

"The works deemed adequate in former years for the defence "of New York could not, therefore, in the nature of things, be "adequate at the present day."

"The recent war of England and France against Russia may "illustrate my meaning; for it has taught us what to expect "were either of these nations to wage war against the United "States."

"No invasion of territory, no attempt at territorial conquest "was made, or thought of; for it was well foreseen that no decisive "results would flow from such means. The war consisted exclu- "sively in attacks upon maritime places—great sea-ports—seats of

"commercial and naval power. Such places, by their vast import-
"ance to the well-being and prosperity of a nation—by the large
"populations and immense amount of wealth concentrated in them,
"and by their exposure to maritime attack, offer themselves at
"once as points at which the most decisive results may be pro-
"duced. Cronstadt, Sebastopol, Sweaborg, Kinburn, Odessa,
"Kertch, Petropauloski, and other places of less note, were in
"succession or simultaneously objects of attack; while such as
"the first named became, indeed, the true seats of war."

"Around Sebastopol assailed and assailant gathered their re-
"sources, and on the result of the arduous struggle may be said
"to have turned the issue of the war. Had it not been so decided
"*there*, Cronstadt would have been the next field of combat,—for
"which, indeed, the Allies had made the most enormous prepara-
"tions."

"Is it not *certain* that in future all war of maritime powers
"against the United States, will take a similar course? All ter-
"ritorial invasion being out of the question, it is against our *great*
"sea-ports and strategic points of coast defence—such as New
"York, New Orleans, and San Francisco—pre-eminently New
"York,—that an enemy will concentrate his efforts. Against these
"he will prepare such immense armaments,—against these he will
"call into existence special agencies of attack,—which (unless met
"by an inexpugnable defensive system) shall *insure* success."

"The mere defense of the city against *ordinary fleets*, is no
"longer the question; but *through the defensive works to be here*
"*erected, the nation is to measure its strength against the most*
"*lavish use of the resources of a great maritime power, aided by*
"*all that modern science and mechanical ingenuity in creating or*
"*inventing means of attack, can bring against them;* in short,
"in fortifying New York, *we are really preparing the battle-field*
"*on which the issue of future momentous contests is to be de-*
"*cided.*"

I most respectfully invite your attention to the last paragraph here quoted. No language that I could now use, would convey a stronger idea of my profound sense of the real dangers of New York. If the conclusion that I arrive at is well founded, it demands the instantaneous attention of the War Department, and of Congress. If this conclusion is well founded, then there is no topic connected with the question of national defence which will have a stronger bearing upon these constantly recurring issues with foreign nations, in which we see the war-cloud gathering, which may yet, ere long, burst upon us, than this same topic of the "Defence of New York." I will say more specifically, that on the alternative whether, on the one hand, New York is open to the attack of a maritime force, or liable to be sacked by the sudden dash of an army landed in the vicinity; or, on the other, is so

securely defended by water and land, that it may hurl the invader back to the ocean,—will depend greatly the issue of peace or war.

It is a species of folly approaching to insanity, for a nation so constantly holding up to its neighbors the momentous issue of war,—so unavoidably liable to constant entanglements with the most powerful nations on the face of the earth,—to leave this great commercial metropolis liable, the very day almost that war is declared, to the most fearful blow.

It is estimated that the great fire of 1835 destroyed $17,000,000 of property. Yet its ravages were confined to a very limited area. How, in money or in words, could we estimate the loss of property, the destruction of military and naval armaments and stores, the paralysis of the nation's commerce, the shock upon our warlike power, the disgrace upon our scutcheon, which would or *might* result from a successful attack, and a more or less prolonged occupation of the port and harbor.

I trust, Sir, I have succeeded in impressing you with a vivid idea of the "dangers" to which New York is exposed, and of the *importance* of its perfect defence. If so, then I am sure you will concur with me in the opinion that—not as a local question concerning New York merely, nor of the State of New York, nor any sectional group of States—but as *a great national question*, one in which the issues of peace and war, of national triumph or national disgrace are involved, the *prompt* organization of a complete and adequate system of defences for New York, is demanded.

To say what this defensive system should be, will, perhaps, be more difficult. I have said before, that the subject *as a whole*, had not yet been discussed in the new lights in which recent years have presented it. I could, therefore, on many points, give only individual opinions, and, of course, these must be very general in their nature.

But, even in attempting to give such opinions, I am met by the embarrassing fact that the shadow of *doubt* has been recently thrown over even the elementary principles which have generally governed our defensive works, by high authority; even yourself, Sir, seem to have found reason to entertain such doubts.

Far be it from me to desire to withhold from the freest discussion anything connected with this great question. I have assumed the problem of the defense of New York to be a modified and enlarged one. I am willing, if you choose, Sir, that it should be discussed even in its simplest elements; and, still further, as every species of battery, armed with such artillery as we now have, whether it be the simple earthen parapet, or the massive castellated structure, lifting its numerous guns, tier upon tier, are confessedly inadequate (without auxiliary aid of *some kind*) to the *perfect* sealing up of

a channel against the rapid *passage* of a hostile fleet, I shall be the first to hail the inventor, be he one whose "functions are con- "fined to the most elevated branch of military science," or to the workshop of the mechanic, who will provide us with something which *will do this.*

In attempting to discuss the merits of our coast defences, one is met at the very outset by the opposing characters of the criticisms by which they have been assailed. It is now scarce twenty years since the entire system was subjected to severe animadversion from the, then, highest military authority of the government, from one whose public services, military and civil, and high position and character, gave great weight to his strictures.*

It was maintained by the authority to whom I refer—

"1. That, for the defence of the coast, the chief reliance should "be on the navy."

"2. That, in preference to fortifications, floating batteries "should be introduced wherever they can be used."

"3. That we are not in danger from large expeditions, and, "consequently,

"4. That the system of the Board of Engineers comprises "works which are unnecessarily large for the purposes they have "to fulfil."

It was owing to these strictures that the House of Representatives, by resolutions of May 9th, 1840, called upon the War Department "to lay before this House as soon as practicable, a "report of a full and connected system of national defence," &c.

The subject was referred by the War Department to a board of officers of the army and navy, among whom was the present Chief Engineer. The report of that board (see Doc. 206, H. R. 26th Congress, 1st session), fully endorsed by the Secretary of War, Mr. Poinsett, is universally admitted to be one of the most able and comprehensive expositions of the whole subject of coast defence extant, and, *generally*, as a complete refutation of the strictures upon our actual system.

This discussion has become now somewhat out of date. I allude to it, however, to call your attention to the two last strictures there made against our system, viz.:

"That we are not in danger from large expeditions, and, con- "sequently,

"That the system of the Board of Engineers comprises works "which are unnecessarily large for the purposes they have to ful- "fil;" and to ask you to bear in mind that the engineers are *now* censured (whether *deservedly* or not is not the question) for having been for the last twenty years carrying on its constructions under

* See Senate Document No. 293, page 1, 24th Congress, 1st session, vol. 4.

this very assumption, that we are *not* "in danger from large ex-"peditions."

I do not discuss, at present, the accuracy of this proposition twenty years ago, or whether if true *then*, it has ceased to be so *now*.

The report which I have mentioned may be said to have silenced opposition for the next ten years; but it will (as I have said before) be considered out of date, at present, owing to the rapid developments since made in means of maritime attack. I therefore pass to more recent animadversions upon the system.

In 1851 the following resolutions were adopted by the House of Representatives:

"1st. *Resolved*, That the Secretary of War be directed to "report to this House, the second Monday in December next, on "the subject of the land defences of the country, in which he will "review the general system adopted after the war with Great "Britain, and since pursued, in regard to the permanent fortifica-"tions then deemed necessary for the national defence; and that "he report, whether the general plan may not be now essentially "modified, by reducing the number of works proposed to be "erected, and by abandoning some of the forts now in progress of "construction."

"2d. *Resolved*, That the Secretary of War also report the "number of fortifications which have been built, including those "nearly completed under the general system, the number in pro-"gress of construction, and the number not yet commenced, but "proposed to be erected, and in such form as will conveniently "show the States and Territories in which the several forts are "situated, or to be located; when the work was commenced; "when completed, or expected to be finished; the number and "calibre of the guns mounted or to be mounted; the estimated "cost, the amount expended, and the sums yet required to finish "or construct, as the case may be, each work;"—and the Secretary of War, to carry them into effect, addressed the following queries to several distinguished officers of the army and navy:*

"1st. To what extent, if any, ought the present system of "fortifications for the protection of our sea-board to be modified "in consequence of the application of steam to vessels of war,

* These officers were,—

Commodore Stewart,	Of the Navy.	General Totten,	Of the Army.
Commodore Morris,		Colonel Thayer,	
Commodore Perry,		Colonel De Russy,	
Commander Cunningham,		Major Chase,	
Commander Dupont,		Major Delafield,	
Lieutenant Lanman,			
Lieutenant Maury,			
Lieutenant Dahlgren,			

"the invention or improvement of projectiles, or other changes "that have taken place since it was adopted in the year 1816?"

"2d. What reliance could be placed on vessels of war, or of "commerce, floating batteries, gun-boats, and other temporary "substitutes for permanent fortifications?"

"3d. Is it necessary or expedient to continue the system of "fortifications on the northern lakes?"

The character of the strictures with which the defensive system was then assailed, may be judged from the resolutions of Congress, and from the queries proposed. *Essentially* they were the same which we are constantly hearing *now*—the same which forever *will* be heard to the end of time, upon *all* established systems, viz.: that it was *behind the times*,—that railroads, telegraphs, increase of population, war-steamers, and steam ocean-navigation generally, and "*Big Guns*," in particular, had rendered the system of defence quite obsolete.

As to the replies of these several army and navy officers, it may be briefly stated that the defensive system was sustained by Commodores Stewart and Morris, Commanders Cunningham and Dupont, Lieutenants Lanman and (with qualifications) Dahlgren, of the navy, and by General Totten, Colonel De Russy, and Major Delafield, of the Engineers.* That it was opposed or censured as requiring modifications by Commodore Perry and Lieutenant Maury, of the navy, and Major Chase, of the Engineers. Now, it must be borne in mind that all the recent "changes" which are *now* supposed to have rendered our maritime defensive works obsolete, or "old fogyish," viz.: increase of population,—great concentration of wealth, population, and national resources in our great cities,—railroads, telegraphs, ocean steam-navigation, and the consequent facility of bringing upon our coasts suddenly large armies in steam fleets,—improvements in calibre, and character of sea-coast and naval ordnance,—horizontal shell-firing, &c.,—were then well known, and, indeed, formed the foundation of the strictures of that day. What has happened since, has been but the realization of what was then foreseen.

If there is any exception to the broad statement just made, it is found in the recent improvement in small arms; but this is a matter which I conceive to have very little bearing on the topic in hand.

A few quotations, therefore, from the replies of those officers who opposed or demanded modifications in the system, will be interesting for comparison with the views of objectors of the present day.

Commodore Perry says,—"And besides, we have the expe-

* Colonel Thayer did not respond; his opinions, however, were well-known.

"rience of history to show that extensive military works are "alike destructive of the prosperity and the liberties of the "people, saying nothing of the enormous cost of construction, "and the keeping them in condition for service. I may instance "the fortresses of Spain, of Portugal, and of the former republics "of Genoa and Venice, as gigantic works, now of little use, and "looked upon by the voyager only as monuments of the extrava- "gance and peculating spirit which, at the time of their erection, "characterized the people of those governments."

"Experience, moreover, shows that while the fortifications of "San Juan de Ulloa at Vera Cruz, the Moro of Havana, the "Castle protecting the harbor of Carthagena upon the coast of "Columbia, the Venetian fortress of Napoli de Romania in "Greece, the Castle of St. Elino in Malta, and many others of "similar extent and character, are considered by some impregna- "ble,—they command only a circuit embraced within the range "of their guns, and cannot, in any manner, prevent a landing of "the enemy upon the coast beyond the extent of such range; in "a word, these works are useful only to command the entrances "of the ports which they were intended to defend, and to cover "with their guns, vessels anchoring in their immediate vicinity. "The celebrated fortress of Gibraltar neither commands the pas- "sage of the Straits, nor the anchorage on the Spanish side of "the bay of that name. They are, in truth, like chained mons- "ters, harmless beyond the reach of their manacles; not so with "steam batteries: *they* have the means of locomotion, and "*their* power can be made effective at any point upon the coast "capable of being reached by an enemy's vessel."

"Of all the coasts of Europe, that of Great Britain is the "least provided with fortifications; and yet her soil has not been "trodden by a successful enemy since the conquest; solely pro- "tecting her military and naval arsenals by perfect and *well- "garrisoned* works. She depends mainly for defence of her "coast upon her navy, and the warlike spirit of her yeomanry; "and the very absence of fortified works prevents a deceitful "reliance upon such defences, and keeps alive the more gallant "and more certain dependence upon their own personal prow- "ess."

"And thus it should be with us. Man to man, the Americans "are at least equal to any other race; and they are fully capable "of driving back to their ships or capturing any number of "troops that might have the temerity to land upon our soil."

Lieutenant Maury says,—"Now were it possible for an enemy "with the greatest army that ever was led into battle by the "greatest captain, to take the country by surprise, and to land at "Long Island Sound, or in Lynn Haven Bay, and to be disem- "barking his last piece of artillery before he was discovered, "these railroads, the power of steam, with the aid of lightning,

"would enable the government, before he could reach the heights "of Brooklyn, or the outskirts of Norfolk, to have there in wait- "ing, and ready to receive him and beat him back into the sea, "a force two to one greater than his, however strong."

"Suppose that in 1847, there had been in active operation "between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico, a line of magnetic "telegraph, and such a railroad as is the Erie road of New York,— "can it be supposed that our generals, being cognizant of the "facts, would have so much as entertained the idea of landing "there as they did, and laying siege to the town?"

"All the world knows where our railroads are, and that the "country is protected from military surprise and, invasion from "the sea, by a net-work of telegraphic wires; the mere know- "ledge of the fact that Norfolk and New York can bring to their "defence such resources, will forever prevent the thought in the "mind of an enemy of landing in force at Lynn Haven Bay, or "on Long Island."

"Those roads, therefore, render a siege to any of the works of "defence before those places, out of the question."

"To lay siege to any place along our sea-front involves not "only the disembarking of an army, but the landing also of the "siege train. This requires time."

"From the time that the head of our invading column jumped "out of the boats, up to their waists in the water, at Vera Cruz, "till General Scott was ready to send his summons to the city, "was thirteen days, and it was four days more before his heavy "artillery drew overtures from the besieged,—total, seventeen "days.

"Imagine an army, the best equipped, it may be, the world "ever saw, that should attempt to beleaguer one of our strong- "holds for seventeen days! Within that time, we could bring "against him, by railroads and steamboats, millions of the free- "men which this country ever holds in reserve to fight its battles. "It might be Boston before which this imaginary army is sup- "posed to sit down in imaginary siege; or it may be New York, "Philadelphia, Norfolk, Charleston, or New Orleans,—it is "immaterial where. In less than half the Vera-Cruz time, we "could throw millions of men into any one of these places, and "subsist them, in the meantime, by a daily market-train of cars "and steamboats catering for them in the abundant markets of "the Mississippi Valley."

"It is impossible that any army, however brave, spirited, and "daring, should ever think of invading a country like this, and "attacking us upon our own ground, when we have under our "command such powers of concentration, and such force in reserve "as twenty millions of freemen, the electric telegraph, the railroad "car, the locomotive, and the steamboat."

And again, alluding to an invasion of Washington: "Now, is "it not obvious, supposing the country to be in a reasonable state "of preparation at the commencement of war—supposing this "much—is it not obvious, by sending telegraphic messages, and "using the powers of steam for conveyance, the American general "might sit down here, in Washington, and at daylight the next "morning commence an attack upon that enemy, both in front "and in rear, with almost any amount of force, consisting of "regulars, volunteers, and militia, that can be named? Retreat, "for such a foe, would be out of the question, and re-embarkation "an impossibility.

"Therefore, so far as the system of 1816 was intended to defend "the country from invasion along the Atlantic sea-board, steam, "railroads, and the telegraph have rendered it as effete as did the "invention of fire-arms the defences which the military science of "that age had erected against the shafts of the archer."

* * * * * * *

"Suppose the system of 1816 to have been completed; that "the fortifications therein contemplated had all been built, pro- "visioned, equipped, and garrisoned. Now, saving only those "which protect the large cities from the guns of men-of-war, sup- "pose the alternative should be presented to our military men, "whether they would undertake to defend the country from inva- "sion with such a complete system of fortifications, but without "the assistance of railroads, steamers, and telegraph; or with the "assistance of railroads, steamers, and telegraph, but without the "aid of fortifications.

"I suppose, could such an alternative be submitted to every "officer of the army, from the oldest down to the youngest, that "there would be but one answer—and that would be, 'Down "'with the forts,—and give us the railroad, the locomotive, the "'steamboat, and the telegraph.'"

But, Lieutenant Maury does not *dispense* entirely with forts; he says further, "It is chiefly *to keep such ships* (*i. e.*, ships of "war) *from burning our cities and havens* within reach of their "broadsides, that we want forts and castles."

Exactly so. It is just *for that*, and if he had said "burning our cities and occupying our havens" (using the term "forts and "castles" technically), I might almost say, *only that*, that we want them.

But, as we have seen before, the cry "Down with the forts,— "and give us the railroad, the locomotive, the steamboat, and the "telegraph," does not mean "Down with *all* forts," but only such as we do not want to protect our "cities and havens;" a very important qualification certainly.

Furthermore, he says, "The forts already completed, or well "advanced towards completion, are believed to be sufficient for

"this." At the date this was written, the great port of the Pacific, San Francisco, had not a fort even begun; the great port and commercial metropolis of the Atlantic, New York, had not on its great avenue of approach, the Narrows, works at all capable (see the opinion of Dahlgren, a brother officer of the navy, and one of the very ablest officers of the navy, printed in juxtaposition to Lieutenant Maury's) of protecting this great city from "burning" by the broadsides or curved fire of ships of war. But this is but a specimen of the accuracy and soundness of criticism with which our defensive system has usually been assailed.

Lieutenant Maury, however, argues that "if one gun, in open "battery on the shore, 'whether mounted on a tower or not,' be "superior to 'one or two' ships of war, surely our seaport towns "*of second and third rate importance* (the italics are mine) may "safely rely upon open batteries on the beach, to protect them "from 'British' or any other 'men-of-war.'"

I make one more citation from Lieutenant Maury, that you may compare with opinions more recently expressed:

"'The fortifications of the coast,' says the board of army "officers, whose able report of 1840 quieted the public mind, and "fastened for ten years longer upon the country the effete system "of 1816—'The fortifications of the coast,' say they, '*must* be "'competent to the double task of interdicting the passage of "'ships, and resisting land attacks—*two distinct and independ-*"'*ent qualities.* The first *demands merely an array in suitable* "'*numbers, and in proper proportions, of heavy guns, covered by* "'*parapets, proof against shot and shells.*'"

"Now, I propose to show that the railroads, and the means of "locomotion in this country, sufficiently defend our fortifications "from land attacks; and that, consequently, the principal *requis-*"*ite* henceforward, in a system of fortifications for the coast, is "merely an array, in suitable numbers and proper proportions, of "heavy guns along the beach, to cover the approaches of ships "from sea, to seaport towns." And particularly I call your attention to his recommendation, "That no further expenses be incurred "for preparing our fortifications along the Atlantic sea-board, to "withstand *sieges by land.*"

Having given, I think, a fair view of the arguments of the objecting naval officers, I now proceed to give a few citations from Major Chase's response. As an engineer officer of rank, connected with the present system of coast defence from its initiation, his objections, or demand for modifications, deserved careful consideration.

After giving a history of the rise and progress of the present system of coast-defence—referring to the experience of our last war with Great Britain—reviewing the "new and important "elements in the national defence and security which have been

"rapidly, almost magically, developed in the last thirty-five years, "—such as the increase of population—the progress of improve- "ment in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, and in facile "lines of intercommunication," he says:

"In view, then, of all these things, and especially of the new "elements—moral, political, and physical—claimed to have been "developed, and to have greatly increased the power of the United "States, *and which must be considered in relation to the future "arrangement of the national defence*, the undersigned thinks "that the general plan adopted thirty-five years ago should be "essentially modified, by reducing the number and size of the "works proposed to be constructed, and by abandoning some of "the defences now in progress of construction, or which are about "to be constructed under existing appropriations made by Con- "gress."

"The undersigned is also of the opinion that the best interests "of the country require that the subject of modification should be "submitted to a board, composed of artillery and engineer officers, "and some eminent civilians;—That no new work should be "commenced, even if it has been appropriated for by Congress; "and that no appropriation should be made by Congress for the com- "pletion and repairs of existing works, until the whole subject of "the national defence has been considered and reported upon by "the said board." And he further advances the opinion—"Suffi- "cient has been said to show that railways and the electric tele- "graph contribute largely to the national defence; that the works "covering our large sea-ports and other important points, placed "in connection with the railways and telegraph, if they were now "to be constructed, might be much reduced in size and cost, if not "in number; that the facility with which these works could be "relieved in case of an attempted siege, would have rendered it "only necessary for them to be made secure against a *coup-de- "main*."

"Under these views of the subject, it is at once perceived that, "whilst the extension and invention of railways (and the electric "telegraph) do not supersede, they greatly diminish the necessity "of adding to the number and cost of the fortifications on the sea- "board; or, in other words, that the future prosecution of the "system of defence by permanent fortifications, should be on a "very reduced scale, in comparison with the magnificent one "adopted thirty-five years ago."

And, in relation to the influence of steam-navigation and improvements in artillery, he says:

"The navigation of the ocean by steam, and the application of "steam to vessels of war, have certainly added to the facilities of "naval operations, in making attacks and transporting troops, "But such operations are necessarily confined to short lines, like

"those between France and England, in the Mediterranean, or on "the lakes between Canada and the United States."

"Attacks by steamers can only be formidable when they are "numerous, and filled with troops destined for a grand attack; "but when they are thus filled with troops, munitions of war, "provisions, armament, and their regular crews, little room is left "for the fuel necessary to propel them to the scene of action and "in retreat. Such steamers cannot be propelled either con- "veniently or rapidly, until the propelling power can be produced "at a less outlay for fuel. At the rate supposed to be the maxi- "mum of speed of war steamers, lines of operations over one "thousand miles (five hundred in advance and five hundred in "retreat) cannot be occupied advantageously, or with the effi- "ciency necessary to a great movement of strategic or direct "attack. Numerous transports would be necessary to convey "supplies of coal to convenient places on the coast, where depots "for the same would have to be established and defended at great "cost, for they would be constantly in danger of attack by sea "and land by enterprising assailants. Besides, the great loads of "men, munitions, armaments, provisions, and fuel, that war and "transport steamers would be obliged to carry, multiply the dan- "gers of navigation."

"Certainly, steamers could make sudden and brief attempts "to enter harbors and destroy towns; but fast-sailing ships, with "favorable winds, could do the same, if this kind of marauding "and piratical warfare was carried on by any Christian nation "calling itself civilized, and if not opposed by the same machines "of war as those used by the enemy and by acts of retaliation."

"Such attempts might be successful in attack and retreat, if "made in the night, even if the harbor was strongly fortified, if "the fortifications were unaided by rafts and hulks lying across "the channels."

"But a demonstration on a large scale against the important "ports and arsenals, for the purpose of taking possession and "levying contributions, requires considerable land forces, even "against such points as were not defended by batteries; for at "such points, in time of war, earth erections would be made and "easily supplied with cannon of heavy caliber, that would do "great damage, by direct and vertical cannonade, to the enemy's "vessels and forces afloat, after they had entered the harbor, and "probably compel them to leave it, and force them to select a "more distant point for the initiative of attack."

"If the enemy, strong in ships and soldiers, could be driven "from Boston, by the erection of some redoubts in the course of "one night, it is hardly to be supposed that he would attempt to "recapture the position, or to attack any other position similarly "situated."

"Any such demonstration at the present day would be checked "by the means just enumerated, and be met on its flanks and in "front by the mobile forces rallied by the telegraph to the point "of attack."

"The improvement in artillery, as regards size and efficiency, "has been, of late years, very great; but it inures more to the "benefit of the defence than the attack. In the same way that, if "steam, applied to ships of war, affords any advantages to the "attack, steam, applied on railways, combined with the electric "telegraph, affords greater advantages to the defence, by reason "of the greater facility with which forces may be moved by the "latter means."

"From all which it may be safely asserted, that the navigation "of the ocean by steam, the application of steam to vessels of war, "and recent improvements in artillery and other military inven- "tions, do not exhibit the attack of forts on the sea-board superior "to the defence, when those forts are connected with railways, "and are brought within succor of the surrounding population; "nor do they render additions to the present fortifications in "number, size or cost, in any wise necessary. But, on the con- "trary, the improvement in artillery, if those fortifications had "now to be built, would enable their plans to be reduced *one-half* "in size, and the armament *one-fourth* in amount."

In what precedes, I believe I have given a fair and complete view of the "objections" to the system of coast defence, as they were urged scarcely eight years ago. I do not pretend that our views of the problem of coast defence should be exactly the same that they were at that date; for I think, in relation to some of our great sea-ports at least, the developments of the recent war of the Allies against Russia, has made the problem quite a new one. But I do affirm that that war exhibited but a development—or realization rather—of the changes which form the basis of these criticisms of 1851. Let us, therefore, sum up these objections of 1851.

Our forts need no longer be so large;—"forts and castles" may even be dispensed with, and a few powerful guns, "in open batteries," substituted. The idea of strength against land attack (or siege) is by one critic scouted. "Now, were it possible for an "enemy, with the greatest army that ever was led into battle, by "the greatest captain, to take the country by surprise, and to land "at Long Island Sound, or in Lynn Haven Bay, and to be disem- "barking his last piece of artillery, before he was discovered—these "railroads, the power of steam, with the aid of lightning, would "enable the government, before he could reach the heights of "Brooklyn, or the outskirts of Norfolk, to have there, in waiting, "and ready to receive him, and beat him back into the sea, a "force two to one greater than his, however strong." While

another thinks that, "the facility with which these works could "be relieved, in case of an attempted siege, would have rendered "it only necessary for them to be made secure against a *coup de* "*main*." And his opinions, as to "demonstrations on a large "scale, against the important ports and arsenals," will be found in the passage already quoted.

I pass now from "objections" of 1851 to "objections" of 1858. These are found in a "Letter," addressed to yourself, Sir, by Lieutenant Morton, of the Engineers, which has been published, and which, as it appears to have not only had much influence upon your own views, but on the minds of the public, deserves much more than a passing notice. They are summed up by the author in the following language:

"The first objection I offer to the existing system is with re-'spect to the size. It adopts, even in localities where there is 'plenty of room,* different sorts of *masonry casemated castles*, of 'the smallest area that will hold the number of guns required, in 'from two to five tiers; the guns firing through embrasures in 'the scarp wall, which is exposed to its base, or nearly so, to the 'fire of flotillas. This remark applies to the sea fronts of all our 'sea-coast forts of importance. (Those not on this principle are 'small, and situated in localities where one sort of work will 'answer as well as another.) The works referred to, have, in 'some cases, land fronts; that is, fronts which do not bear on 'the approaches of ships, or on anchorage ground. These are 'arranged sometimes on the bastion system, sometimes on the 'German; but in all cases are contracted and weak,† owing to 'the difficulty‡ of joining strong land fronts to casemated sea 'fronts, of small development."

"The small area of these works will prevent them, in the first place, from holding any more ammunition and stores, than they will need if exposed to protracted bombardment. As to a siege, those which are out of the reach of help, such as Key West, Fort Point, Ship Island, and Pensacola, will, probably, be short of supplies very soon, and be reduced from that cause. There will be, *in no case, the interior space* required to accommodate the magazines, &c., which must be located and protected, at the

* "As at Key West, Ship Island, Fort Point, Pensacola, the site of Fort Tompkins, and Fort Richmond, at Sandy Hook, Fort Adams, and other places."

† "Without any exception, they are smaller than a Vauban front."

‡ "In illustration of this, see Forts Adams and Schuyler, in each of which, two sides of the main work are flanked by flanking casemates in the outworks. This arrangement is certainly open to criticism; but I mention it only to show that it has been found difficult to connect the sea and land fronts; and I wish it to be understood, that I do not find fault with the plan of these works but only object to this plan being followed hereafter, now that it appears to be unsuitable to circumstances that have arisen since they were built."

"points I have specified, and where the plan of fortification is still
"to be decided upon."

"A second disadvantage springing from the contracted area
"is, that there is not enough room on the terrepleins to spare for
"temporary bombproofs, traverses, &c., which are necessary to
"protect the barbette guns from ricochet and reverse fire, and
"vertical fire. Also, the garrison, as well as the guns, will be
"closely packed, and during a bombardment the chances of
"casualties will be increased from this cause; and from the fact
"that the heads of the casemate arches being open on the interior,
"and having a direction towards a common centre, more frag-
"ments of a single shell, bursting inside the work, will probably
"enter them, than if they were developed on longer lines."

"3d. Works built on this system expose a large mark to the
"fire of flotillas,* which can hardly be missed; and a certain
"proportion of the entire number of shots must, therefore, be
"counted upon to enter the embrasures, carrying with them
"splinters of stone."

"Those shots which do not hit the embrasures, will produce a
"certain effect in shaking the wall; and, considering the calibre
"and number of the guns that enter into the armament of a
"modern flotilla, there is reason to fear breaching."†

"It must be noted, also, that a small front is exposed to a
"more *converging* fire than a large one; a point of importance
"according to all military authorities."

"4th. The use of casemates brings one tier of guns about at the
"level of the ground, or site; and in those cases where a ditch
"cannot be made to surround the work (as is the case, for exam-
"ple, at Fort Adams, Fort Schuyler, Fort Sumter, Fort Indepen-
"dence, Fort Hamilton, and others), the defect results that an
"entrance may be effected by the enemy by surprise, or under
"certain other circumstances, by these embrasures. [It appears
"that the southern tower at Bomarsund was entered, and taken
"by a small party of French, who entered through the embrasures
"though all the garrison had not yet retreated from it into the
"keep.] The iron shutters, recently proposed, will not entirely
"remove this defect, *which is inherent to small fronts.*"

* "M. Richild Grivel (1857) is of opinion that, considering the greater calib
"and force of the sea-service guns recently adopted, and the *comparative safe*
"afforded them by floating batteries, no isolated masonry fort, however skilfully co
"structed, can long resist an attack properly conducted."

† "It is certain that the scarps of our sea-coast works are no stronger than the
"of Bomarsund; brick walls of eight feet thickness, or the same backed with co
"crete, or granite backed with concrete, form our scarps, which are three fe
"thinner around each embrasure, and are, in many cases not bonded to the counte
"forts in their rear. I do not assert that the walls of Bomarsund were breached fr
"the water, but refer back for a comparison between large guns afloat and sm
"ones ashore, to show that a less accurate fire, provided it is from heavier gu
"will effect a breach."

"5th. The present system is carried out to advantage only on "sites close to the water; and hence, in many cases, the advan- "tages offered by the nature of commanding plateaus or promon- "tories have been neglected, and works built at the foot of heights, "even when an artificial site was necessary for the purpose."*

A system of fortifications, or of *anything else*, which requires time and money to construct, and which, when constructed, are intended to last for years, must have more flexibility than ordinarily belongs to works of this nature, if it can meet the views of objectors, who, in the brief space of seven years, on the one hand, scout the idea of *land* defense entirely, or denounce our works as too strong in this particular; and on the other, criticise these land defences as "weak and contracted."

I do not exactly understand what Lieutenant Morton's remedy is for all these alleged evils; for, though he has proposed a "system" of "detached bastions," connected by earthen curtains, the "smallest application of which would be a pentagon of 550 yards "a side, and the largest sizes being polygons of 750 yards a side," he himself records, without answering, the objection, "that "the extent of ground occupied by the enclosure is too great for "some of the sites which are available for the location of bat- "teries;" and moreover states expressly—"It must be recollected "that I propose to fortify in this manner, only certain points of "the sea-coasts, which I mention, and, in view of future cases, "define the nature of;" and his specification and definition is as follows:

"I propose that the system sketched in the preceding discus- "sion should be used at Key West, Ship Island, San Francisco, "possibly at Pensacola, and at other or future points of United "States territory, which are comprised in the following class, or "classes, viz: places that are fitted by nature to form bases of "operations for sea warfare, by being located where they may "protect our commerce, and from which that of the enemy may "be annoyed; that are convenient places of retreat for repairs or "safety, for government ships and for privateers, or merchantmen "pursued by the enemy; that can be made also safe and conve- "nient depots for artillery, ammunition and stores; or places that "may, in addition to some or all of the above properties, be made "centres of defence, from land as well as sea attacks of territories "isolated or distant from the United States."

Neither the specification nor the definition apply to more than an *exceedingly small* portion of the "sites" requiring sea-coast batteries, while the objection that he records applies to most of them. If, therefore, the objections made to the "different sorts of "masonry casemated castles" are valid, we find no substitute in

* "As at Fort Adams, Fort Richmond, Fort Point, and others."

his essay, and however forcible the objections may be, until some thing better is proposed or invented, we must be content with them; for I shall show hereafter that "masonry casemated castles" have played a great part in preserving sea-ports—commercial and naval depots (the true and proper objects of coast defence) from destruction—that they have fulfilled completely the objects for which they were constructed.

Let us examine the subject a little more closely. Years ago it had passed into a proverb in France, that "a gun on shore is worth "a ship at sea,"* and the French "Aide-memoire d'artillerie" expresses the same idea in other words: "That a battery of four "pieces of large calibre, well placed, and well served, ought to "get the better [avoir raison] of a ship of 120 guns."

But the question, which of the two will "get the better" in a direct contest, is a very different one from that which concerns the mere *rapid passage* of a ship or steamer through a channel defended by a battery; and it is, I think, in overlooking in a measure this important distinction that Lieutenant Maury and many others, arguing from the surprising results of certain well-known contests between very small open batteries and ships, have proposed, instead of stone batteries, "one or more heavy guns planted in open "battery along the beach."

Even if it was admitted that the fire of a gun in an "open "battery" was necessarily so much more effective (which I greatly doubt) than that of one in a casemate, it may be remarked that as (in the present state of artillery) it is, at best, but one out of great many shots that touches a ship in a vital part, or sets her on fire, a *few guns* cannot be expected to prevent the *passage* of a fleet, nor even of a single vessel.

I have said already that no battery or system of batteries has yet been invented which shall seal hermetically, a channel (like the Narrows, for instance) the passage of which offers to an enterprising enemy an object sufficient to induce him to run the risk at all hazards. What, then, can be done? We must, to defend *such* a passage, use only guns of the *most destructive capacities*—and we must *multiply them*, so that we can throw upon him a perfect hail-storm of fire, throughout his whole path—and we *must leave no spot either in approaching his object, or after he gets before it*, not under our fire; and even then, we must, in many cases, call in auxiliary aid.

Again, with regard to the open battery, this peculiar efficiency which Lieutenant Maury attributes to it, does not belong to it *at all*, except *in certain sites*, which cannot always, nor even frequently, be found.

Lieutenant Dahlgren says, "So far, therefore, as casemated

* "Un canon à terre vaut un vaisseau à la mer."

"batteries are concerned, shells have added very little to the power "of ships; but against guns *en barbette* they will be found of ma- "terial assistance, especially if charged with balls and used as "shrapnel. And against open works, the concentration afforded "by the well-served broadsides of one or more ships, should suffice "to silence the works, if the vessels have no unusual disadvantages "to encounter, and are brought within sure distance." And again, in his very interesting and able remarks on the "Incidents of the "War" at the conclusion of his work on "Shells and Shell "Guns:"—

"The fire of a small barbette or uncovered work, can always "be kept under by the rifled musket and shrapnel, judiciously "posted, taking the advantage of such shelter as the locality af- "fords, or using pits for the sharp-shooters if necessary. The "broadside can then be brought to bear, or the men sent ashore "in force to assault—circumstances may even admit of the land- "ing one or two cannon to breach the work.

"The unqualified assumption, that a tower or small redoubt, "with its two or three guns, can of itself make good the defence "against a heavy ship, would naturally suggest more than is con- "templated; for in that case, why resort to the cost of extensive "works to defend a harbor, when a few towers might fully answer "the purpose? But the fact is, that the advantage of site which "is required to give effect to this species of defence, is rarely to "be found just where it is needed. It existed neither at Cronstadt "nor at Sweaborg; and at Sebastopol the elevated works of this "nature only served to command the position for attack on Fort "Constantine from seaward. Of themselves, they could not have "prevented the entrance of a single vessel into the port, nor have "inflicted any material damage on an enemy making the at- "tempt.

"Again, it frequently happens that the works are too limited "in extent, or isolated and not capable of mutual support; the "masonry may be bad—the site low and the guns unprotected by "casemates—the ordnance of inefficient power, and not command- "ing all accessible positions—the garrison inadequate in numbers "and quality. In such cases the ship cannot fail to have the ad- "vantage, and it only remains to use it by attacking in proper "force, rapidly and energetically, concentrating the full fire of the "line at decisive distances upon the unguarded or weak points, "and affording no opportunity for improving the state of the "works. Under this head may be classed those actions where "ships have been eminently successful—Algiers, Acre, Vera Cruz, "Kinburn, Petropauloski," &c., &c.

Even if the "advantages of site" existed, *a small number of guns* would not always answer the purpose. *The whole front of the public lands* on Staten Island, at the Narrows, is (or will be)

girdled by open earthen batteries, but *it is not* enough—nor would I trust these *open batteries alone*, if they *could* contain guns enough.

Grivel * (who is quoted as entertaining the opinion that "no "isolated masonry fort, however solidly constructed, can long "resist an attack properly conducted,") uses the following language:

"We could then" (he refers to the case in which the site is low and ships can approach near), "if we feared being commanded or "taken in enfilade by fires of ships, substitute for earthen batte- "ries, works in masonry, casemated, and *with several stories of* "*covered fires.* [The italics are mine.] This kind of fortification "will expose, it is true, its 'personnel' to the chance of embrasure "shot, or to wounds from stone fragments" (as if any warlike structure had yet been invented in which there was no *danger*) "and its material to that of a breach; but these inconveniences "will be in part compensated by the *assured protection*, to the "greater part of its artillery, from the plunging or enfilading fires "of ships." An "assured protection to the greater part of its "artillery" is certainly a great object attained by "this kind of "fortification," and it doubtless would be able longer "to resist "an attack properly conducted" than a work which, like Kinburn, had no such assured protection.

Let me now allude to objections applying *particularly* to these kind of works; and *first* as to this liability to *breaching* here hinted at by Grivel, and urged again by Lieutenant Morton, who refers to Grivel's authority and opinions. There is not one single fact on record derived from the numerous attacks of the Allies on Russian "casemated castles" (and they presented themselves to the Allied fleets almost everywhere, and with all that constitutes the "objections" to this class of works in their most glaring form), nor in the history of any other maritime attacks on fortifications, to justify this fear. The only event of the war which gives any *apparent* ground for it, is the attack on Kinburn.

To draw any conclusion from this affair, it is necessary to understand the character of the *works* which had to oppose the tremendous armament arrayed against them. Grivel's account of them conveys a very erroneous impression. He says, "The "citadel of Kinburn, built upon a tongue of sand, could be ranked "in the category of those masonry-casemated works for which the "Russians seem to manifest a preference for the defence of insular "positions or of such low sites. This fort, armed upon all its "faces, offered an incomplete tier of covered fires, surmounted by

* "La Marine dans l'attaque des fortifications et le bombardement des villes du "littoral," par M. Richild Grivel, Lieutenant de Vaisseau: Paris, 1856. His "opinion" is worth as much as any other individual's, perhaps. We shall see hereafter on what grounds such opinions are founded.

"a long barbette battery with earthen parapets; its armament "amounted to more than sixty guns (bouches à feu), of which, "about half bore upon the open sea. Two new batteries, armed, "one with ten, the other with eleven pieces, and covered with sand "parapets, were located beyond on the extreme point, and com- "pleted, in concert with those of the other shore, the defence of "the pass of Otchakow."

One would imagine from this, that we had here a very perfect specimen of Russian works and of sea-coast defences generally; that the "masonry-casemated works" were such as set at defiance, before Cronstadt, the united maritime power of France and England.

Lieutenant Morton appears to draw his account of Kinburn entirely from Grivel (adding, however, quite gratuitously, "a certain proportion of *sixty-pounder guns*" to the armament of these (supposed) formidable works.)

Having arranged his works, Grivel disposes of them as follows:

"The contest had lasted *four* hours, and, during this short "space of time, the combined fires of our cannon of great pene- "tration, and of our mortars, had sufficed to put the place out of "condition (hors d'état) to resist longer. Represent to yourself all "its cannon dismounted, practicable breaches in the sea-front, all "its edifices burnt or in ruins! In a word, the fort of Kinburn "was, after the picturesque expression of our sailors, *capsized* "(*chaviré de fond en comble*), and if its entire garrison was not "buried under this complete disaster of the defences (son materiel), "it is because the soldiers not employed at the pieces had been "sheltered in the casemates, of which a portion, resisting our "bombs, had remained intact."

So, the men in the "casemates" fared rather better than those serving barbette guns (open batteries), with which our modern critics are so exclusively in love; and had they been *gun-casemates* well arranged, and well constructed, it is likely that the *comparative* security would have been about the same.

But let us contrast this imposing account of the *works*, and the somewhat terrific exposition of the *result*, with the actual facts.*

Dahlgren, drawing his information from "official accounts by "English and French Admirals," describes the works and their location as follows:

"The Boug and the Dnieper issue into a large basin, formed

* The author of Chambers' Pictorial History of the Russian War, says of Kinburn: "The fort at that place had been so little attended to by the Russians, that an "English lieutenant had some time previously offered to seize and blow it up if he "had three hundred men to aid him; but when the Russians saw the English "steamers cruising about, they begun to strengthen the fort and augment the garri- "son, &c."

"partly by the projection of the main shore, partly by a long "narrow strip of sand-beach, which continues from it and takes "a northwesterly direction, until it passes the promontory of "Otchakov, where it terminates, and from which it is separated "by the channel whereby the waters of the estuary empty into "the Black Sea."

"The distance between the spit or extremity of this tongue "and the Point of Otchakov, or the main shore opposite, is about "two miles; but the water is too shoal to admit of the passage of "large vessels of war, except in the narrow channel that runs "nearest to the spit and its northern shore. Here, therefore, are "placed the works designed to command the entrance. They "are three in number. Near the extreme point of the spit is a "covered battery, built of logs, which are filled in and overlaid "with sand,—pierced for eighteen guns, but mounting only ten."

"Advancing further along the beach is a circular redoubt, "connected with the spit battery by a covered way. This work, "built of stone, and reveted with turf, is open, and said to be the "most substantial of the three; it has eleven cannon, and within "is a furnace for heating shot."

"Further on, and where the beach has widened considerably, "is Fort Kinburn, a square, bastioned work, extending to the sea "on the south, and to the waters of the estuary on the north. It "is casemated in part, though but few of these embrasures were "armed,—its chief force being in the pieces *en barbette*, and "some nine or ten mortars. The masonry, though solid, is "represented by an eye-witness not to be bomb-proof, and so "dilapidated by age that the mortar was falling out from the "interstices, leaving the stone to disintegrate. The interior space "was occupied by ranges of wooden buildings, slightly con-"structed, and plastered over."

"This fort is said to be armed with sixty pieces. The English "admiral states that all three of the works mounted eighty-one "guns and mortars. The calibers are not given officially, but "stated in private letters to be 18-pounders and 32-pounders."

The above description will, I think, quite justify the further remark as to these works:

"They were inferior in every respect, and manifestly incapable "of withstanding any serious operation by sea or land. The "main fort was particularly weak in design, and dilapidated; all "of them were indifferently armed and garrisoned."

So much for the works. As to the character of the armament* brought to the assault, the same authority says:

"The Allied force was admirably adapted to the operation,

* I find no detailed statement of the total number of vessels, guns, troops, &c., of the Allied force. The "Pictorial History" gives the following as the English quota, viz., "6 steam line-of-battle ships, 17 steam frigates and sloops, 10 gun-boats, 6 mor-

"embracing every description of vessel, from the largest to the "smallest, and all propelled by steam. There were screw-liners, "and like vessels of inferior class, side-wheel steamers, screw gun-"boats, floating-batteries, mortar-vessels, &c., each armed in what "was considered the most approved manner." And this truly formidable naval force carried *besides* "some thousand troops" on board, all designed to attack these "dilapidated" works of Kinburn.

Without going into the particulars, I will simply give Dahlgren's account of the affair.

"The French floating-batteries (*Devastation*, *Lave*, and *Ton-"nante*) steamed in to make their first essay, anchoring some six "or seven hundred yards off the S. E. bastion of Fort Kinburn, "and at 9.20 opened fire, supported by the mortar-vessels, of "which six were English, by the gun-boats, five French and six "English, and by the steamer *Odin*, 16."

"The heavy metal of the floating-batteries (said to be twelve "50-pounders on the broadside of each) soon told on the walls of "the fort; and the vertical fire was so good that the French "admiral attributed to it, in great part, the speedy surrender of "the place. The gun-boats also made good ricochet practice, "which was noticed to be severe on the barbette batteries."

"The Russian gunners, in nowise daunted by this varied fire, "plied their guns rapidly in return, directing their attention "chiefly to the floating-batteries, which were nearest."

"Exactly at noon, the admirals steamed in with the *Royal "Albert*, 121, *Algiers*, 91, *Agamemnon*, 90, and *Princess Royal*, "90, with the four French liners in close order, taking position in "line, ranging N. W. and S. E., about one mile from the fort, in "twenty-eight feet water."

"At the same time, a squadron of steam-frigates,* under Rear-"Admirals Stewart and Pellion, dashed in through the passage "to the basin, opening fire on the spit and central batteries in "passing, and anchoring well inside of Fort Nicholaiev and "Otchakov. The attack seaward was completed by the *Acre*, 100, "*Curaçoa*, 30, *Tribune*, 30, and *Sphynx*, 6, opening on the "central battery; while the *Hannibal*, 91, *Dauntless*, 24, and "*Terrible*, 21, assailed that on the spit. To this storm of shot "and shells, the Russians could not reply long. In the spit "battery, the sand falling through between the logs, displaced by

"tar-vessels, 3 steam-tenders, 10 transports,—making 52 vessels, carrying in all about "1500 guns, and 5000 troops of all kinds."

The French force is not stated; but there were 4 ships of the line, a number of steam-vessels and gun-boats, besides the 3 famous floating-batteries (here first employed), and a considerable body of troops. The troops of both nations were landed previous to the naval attack, and the place invested by land.

* *Valorous*, 16, *Furious*, 16, *Sidon*, 22, *Leopard*, 12, *Gladiator*, 4, *Firebrand*, 6 *Stromboli*, 6, *Spiteful*, 6, *Asmodie*, *Cacique*, and *Sané*.

"shot and shells, choked the embrasures, and blocked up the "guns. In the fort, the light wooden buildings were in flames at "an early hour; then the walls began to crumble before the balls "which came from every quarter, front, flank, and rear; and as "the guns were disabled successively, the return became feeble, "until few were in condition to be fired, the central redoubt alone "discharging single guns at long intervals. The Russian com- "mander, however, made no sign of surrender; but the admirals, "seeing that his fire had ceased, and further defence was unavail- "ing, hoisted the white flag at 1.35 P. M., upon which the works "were given up on honorable terms."

"The garrison consisted of about fourteen hundred men; their "loss is differently stated,—the French admiral says eighty "wounded,—another, forty-three killed and one hundred and "fourteen wounded."

"The English suffered the least, having but two men wounded, "besides two killed and two wounded in the *Arrow*, by the burst- "ing of her two 68-pounder Lancaster guns."

"The superiority of the Allied vessels in number and caliber "of ordnance was very decided; they must have had at least six "hundred and fifty pieces in play, chiefly 32-pounders, and 8-inch "shell guns, with a fair proportion of 68-pounders and mortars, "besides the 50-pounders of the French floating-batteries. To "which the Russians could only reply with eighty-one cannon "and mortars, and no guns of heavier caliber than 32-pounders, "while many were lower. The great disparity in offensive power "was not compensated to the works by the advantage of com- "manding position, the Russian fort and redoubt being upon "nearly the same level with the ships' batteries, and also very "deficient in proper strength. On the other hand, the depth of "water did not allow the liners to approach nearer than one mile; "and thus their fire was by no means so intense as it would have "been at shorter range."

"This was the sole occasion in which the floating-batteries had "an opportunity of proving their endurance; which was the ques- "tion of most importance, as no one could doubt the effect of long "50-pounders, or 68-pounders, when brought within a few hun- "dred yards of masonry, and able to retain the steadiness indis- "pensable to a breaching fire."

"No siege operation had ever embraced batteries of such "power, for though the English had employed long 68-pounders "at Sevastopol, yet the distance from the objects exceeded a "thousand yards; and the concentration of fire, so far as any "opinion can be formed from the published statements, was far "inferior to that of the thirty-six 50-pounders, in the broadsides "of the three batteries anchored in close order."

"They were hulled repeatedly by shot; one of them (the

"*Devastation*), it is said, sixty-seven times, without any other "effect on the stout iron plates than to dint them, at the most, "one and a half inches,—still, there were ten men killed and "wounded in this battery by shot and shell which entered the "ports,—and the majority of damage to the French personel "(twenty-seven men) occurred in the three floating-batteries."

The affair proves nothing, unless it be, that "dilapidated" and ill-designed and ill-constructed works, armed with inferior calibres, cannot contend against such an overwhelming array of force as was here displayed. But the failure to derive from it any conclusion against "masonry-casemated" works, or "castles," is the more signal, owing to the very important fact that it was *mainly* a contest of "open" or "barbette" batteries, whose superiority over casemated ones has been so much insisted on.

In this account we hear nothing of "practicable breaches," though doubtless thirty-six 50-pdrs., at 500 yards, would "tell" on the walls of such a fort. Yet, as the "vertical fire was so "good that the French admiral attributed to it, in good part, the "speedy surrender of the place," while the "ricochet practice," from the gun-boats, was "severe" upon these *open* batteries—while the "edifices" behind them (old wooden buildings, "slightly constructed, and plastered over") were in a blaze, which must have made, by heat and smoke, the service of the guns almost impracticable—there is no difficulty in accounting for the result of the contest.

Whether or not a "practicable breach" was made, is of little consequence, in such a case; but, turned up-side down as (according to Grivel) the defences were, with the garrison nearly buried in the "ruins," it appears there were only 157 (out of 1,400) killed and wounded—a very small loss, under all the circumstances.

The fact is, that these "open batteries" *were* "turned upside down"—the guns disabled and dismounted, by the deluge of direct, vertical, and ricochet fire poured upon them—as in all "open batteries," in such situations, *ever will happen*.*

* According to the "Pictorial History," the Russian artillerymen at these "open batteries," were exposed *besides* to the fire of *sharpshooters*. It says, "Bazaine," (the General commanding the French troops) "placed two companies of chasseurs "under cover, at a distance of 400 yards from the east side of the fort, and kept up "a fusilade on the Russian artillerymen."

As to the armament, the same author says,—"The captors found nearly 80 guns "mounted in the fort and batteries, mostly long and heavy 18 and 24 pounders; but "there were many others ready for mounting, platforms to support them, and newly "constructed casemates, raising the total of guns to 174."

Notwithstanding that the fort was (according to Grivel) "capsized" (chaviré) and the garrison nearly buried in the "ruins," it does not appear that they were fully sensible of their condition. The "Pictorial History" says,—"The officers in "general bore the scene" (the surrender) "with dignity, but with deep mortifica- "tion; and many of them were said to be on the verge of mutiny against the gover- "nor, so strongly did they resist any proposals for a surrender."

I have given much space to this affair of Kinburn, for Grivel parades it as a fair illustration of what "floating batteries, combined with bomb-vessels, gun-boats, &c.," can do against "masonry-casemated" works. I have shown how inaccurate (by comparison with the official accounts) is Grivel's version of the affair; and I have further shown, that *no conclusion whatever* can be drawn from this contest of insignificant works, armed with low calibres, against such overwhelming means of attack as were here arrayed; unless, indeed, it be this (a fact before well known), that for *low sites*, *open batteries* are the most inefficient of all. The fort of Kinburn surrendered, *not because* it was breached,—not because its defenders were so far diminished by their losses, as to be unable to protract the contest,—but simply because the guns and gunners, exposed in all possible ways, were put hors-de-combat, and the calibres were incapable of doing any great damage to the vessels, at the distance they were stationed.

With regard to the effects and endurance of the much-vaunted *floating-batteries*, Commander Dahlgren very judiciously remarks:

"The use that can be made of floating-batteries, as auxiliaries "in attacking shore-works, must depend on further confirmation "of their asserted invulnerability. It may be that the perform- "ance at Kinburn answered the expectation of the French empe- "ror as regards offensive power, for that is a mere question of the "battering capacity of the heaviest calibres, which is undoubted; "but the main issue, which concerns their endurance, cannot be "settled by the impact of 32-pdr. shot, fired at 600 and 700 yards. "Far heavier projectiles will in future be found on all sea-board "fortifications; and the ingenuity of the artillerist may also be "exerted more successfully than at Kinburn. Still, it is not to be "doubted that the floating-battery is a formidable element in "assailing forts, even if its endurance falls short of absolute invul- "nerability; and the defence will do well to provide against its "employment."

Experiments in England have shown, that such vessels, protected by wrought-iron plates 4½ inches thick, were incapable of resisting a solid 68-pdr. shot at 400 yards.* Such shot, and even greater, they will certainly have to resist, if they are to contend with the modern armament of our fortifications. Grivel sagely cautions them to take position at *such a distance* that they cannot be penetrated. The only possibility, however, of breaching a well-constructed masonry revetment consists in placing the bat-

* "The target was an immense construction of timber and iron, combined exactly "like the sides of the batteries;—iron 4 in. thick. Twenty-four rounds of 68-pdrs. "were fired, the first 14 of which, at 600 yards; and after the first few rounds, the "timber gave way in all directions. The last 10 rounds, at 400, and the work of "destruction was complete. The last shot fired went completely through target, "timber and iron included." (Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal, Jan. 1858.)

tery at *very short distance*. The difficulty of breaching increases enormously, even in land batteries, with increase of distance; far more in floating-batteries, owing to the unavoidable motion of the vessel, which, at considerable distances, scatters the projectiles far and wide.*

The works at *Bomarsund* were taken by means of *land batteries*, which breached the exposed walls of the towers and main work.

There is no more stringent rule of fortification than that which demands that all masonry shall be *covered* (by earth works or otherwise) from the action of land batteries, where the circumstances of the location render their use practicable. The Russians *disregarded* this rule in the arrangement of their works at Bomarsund, and to that disregard owed the prompt reduction of the place. The masonry was faced with large blocks of granite, of very irregular shape, backed by rubble. I doubt very much, whether Lieutenant Morton's assertion is tenable, that, "It is certain that the scarp of our sea-coast works are no stronger than "those of Bomarsund."†

Concerning the action of the *land batteries*, Sir Howard Douglas says, "Authentic information, for the accuracy of which "the author vouches, enables him to state, that, with respect to "the effect of solid shot on the granite, with which the walls were "faced, the French guns made no impression on the blocks when "they struck perpendicularly in the middle of their faces; nor "did the shot fired from the powerful 32-pounder British guns "split the granite when so struck; but, when the blocks were hit "by the latter near the edge, or on a joint of the masonry, they "were displaced, the joints penetrated, the wall shaken; and "this not being backed with solid masonry, but filled in with "rubble, the mass was thrown down, and a practicable breach "formed. This successful operation is very generally, but erroneously, stated to have been effected by the fire of the ships, "and is even strongly held up as a proof of what ships can do, "and ought to attempt elsewhere."

The large joints which the *rubble* facing of Bomarsund offered, facilitated greatly the action of batteries. Such joints are *not* found in our scarps, exposed to vessels' fire; nor, in general, are such walls (where casemated and pierced for guns), "backed with concrete."

But the *experimental practice* of the "Edinburgh," upon the walls of Bomarsund (after the capture), deserves to be recorded;

* The idea that a *floating structure* can be made shot-proof, while the walls of a fort *cannot* be, is so transparently absurd as scarcely to require refutation. All that will be maintained, probably, will be, that in general the latter *are not* shot proof. I shall allude to this subject again.

† See Appendix "A."

for here, if ever, with all the means, and no hostile shot to encounter, a ship's batteries might be expected to breach "granite walls." The "Edinburgh" had in this case, all the *essential qualities* of a floating-battery, viz., the largest and most powerful guns in the British navy: shot-proof sides would not have added to her *offensive* powers.

I give Sir Howard Douglas' own words:—"But the results of "the experimental firing at the remnant of the fort, which, unless "the previous firing of the ships during the attack was absolutely "harmless, must have been somewhat damaged, and moreover "shaken by the blowing-up of the contiguous portions, do not "warrant this conclusion, even should the attacking ships be per-"mitted, like the 'Edinburgh,' to take up, quietly and coolly, "positions within 500 yards, and then deliberately commence and "continue their firing, without being fired at! The firing of the "'Edinburgh,' at 1,060 yards, was unsatisfactory. 390 shot and "shells were fired, from the largest and most powerful guns in the "British navy (viz., from the Lancaster gun of 95 cwt., with an "elongated shell of 100 lbs.;—from 68-pounders of 95 cwt., and "32-pounders of 56 cwt., solid shot guns;—from 10-inch shell "guns of 84 cwt., with hollow shot of 84 lbs.;—from 8-inch shell "guns of 65 and 60 cwt., with hollow shot of 56 lbs.), did but "little injury to the work. At 480 yards, 250 shot, shells, and "hollow shot were fired. A small breach was formed in the "facing of the outer wall, of extremely bad masonry, and consi-"derable damage done to the embrasures and other portions of "the wall; but no decisive result was obtained—no practicable "breach formed, by which the work might be assaulted, taken, "and effectually destroyed, although 640 shot and shells (40,000 "lbs. of metal) were fired into the place, first at 1,060, and then "at 480 yards."

Truly, if floating batteries can do no better than this when they have it "all their own way," I think we need not be in very great apprehension for (even) our "isolated forts," which Grivel seems to think (and Lieutenant Morton quotes his opinion) "cannot long resist an attack properly conducted, *however* "*solidly constructed they may be.*" (The italics are mine.)

The harbor defenses of Sebastapol were very fair specimens of Russian "masonry-casemated" works, and are types of the same class of works built in this country; though the material of which they were built was very inferior, and they were in many *very* important details (as I shall show hereafter), particularly *embrasures*, vastly inferior to our oldest specimens, and not to be compared at all with those built by us in the last few years. The "Naval Cannonade" of these works on the 17th October, 1854, might be expected to throw some light upon the relative powers and liabilities to injury of the two characters of arma-

ments here opposed. But such is not the case. The Russian works were *not* armed with the powerful sea-coast guns *now* deemed essential; and, on the other hand, the allied fleet was *nothing but a fleet*,—*i. e.*, it was not provided with those *special* means of attack (gun-boats, mortar-vessels, floating-batteries, &c.) which will always *hereafter* be provided for such attacks. It was, therefore, an *old-fashioned affair*, and might rather be set down as *the last attempt to array ships of-the-line and ordinary vessels-of-war against fortifications.* This question has long been *practically* (though not confessedly, perhaps) settled. It was settled before our Mexican war, when for near a whole year our fleets threatened San Juan de Ulloa, yet never ventured to measure their strength with it, notwithstanding they had the precedent of the quite recent, much-vaunted French triumph over this *very work.* It was practically settled throughout this whole European war, in which the powerful allied fleets (the *most* powerful naval armaments the world had ever seen), threatened in turn all the strongholds of Russia on the Baltic; and, notwithstanding that public opinion at home, and naval pride in the fleet, demanded some exploit which should be commensurate with the immense preparations made,—retired abashed, and confounded, before the "masonry-casemated castles," whose "crockery" walls did not, after all, seem to invite a close contact, or "hard knocks;" and which so proudly fulfilled their mission in protecting throughout that war, the military and naval depots, the wealth, the commerce, and the *national honor* of Russia.

Sweaborg, indeed, suffered; but it was from a distant bombardment, which left her fortifications and her harbors intact, and only showed the necessity of protecting at greater distance, all great *depots*, or great cities.

Bomarsund——alas for Bomarsund!—or rather for the prestige of the mighty naval armament which would have assaulted it. *One single* "masonry-casemated castle"* bid defiance to this proud armament, whose chiefs, concluding wisely that "discretion "was the better part of valor," sent home for 10,000 French troops, who, with a few 16 and 32-pounder guns in land-batteries, speedily reduced the work.

The "Naval Cannonade" at Sebastapol was a mere "*simu-*"*lacre*" of an operation of which the inutility was felt, and from which no other results were expected than a diversion of the attention and strength of the garrison from the land side, where a real struggle for predominance was going on between the artillery fires of besieged and besiegers.

* It is worthy of remark, in this place, that *this* "casemated castle" (like *very many* of the Russian batteries of the same character), had *nothing but casemate guns.* There was not, (as *is invariably the case* with our own works), an "open battery" (barbette) on the top; the upper tier of arches being simply made bomb-proof by earth, and roofed over.

The allied fleet consisted of 14 French, 10 British, and 2 Turkish ships-of-the-line (some few of which had auxiliary steam power), and a number of side-wheel steamers to tow these; and carried in all about 2,500 guns. It was opposed by about 280 guns from the works. The fleet kept itself (in general) at a respectable distance (from 1500 to 2000 yards); too far to inflict any material injury with its armament (32-pounders, with a moderate proportion of 8-inch shell-guns) upon the works;—too far to receive much from the inefficient armament of the Russian works.

The only exception to this remark applies to the detached English squadron under Sir Edmund Lyons, consisting of the "Agamemnon," "Sanspareil," "London," "Arethusa," and "Albion," the first-named of which vessels took a position at 750 or 800 yards from Fort Constantine, while the others stretched along, at about the same distance from Fort Constantine, the "Wasp Tower," and "Telegraph Battery." Dahlgren describes the result as follows:

"The *Agamemnon* was very seriously maltreated, though not "to such an extent as to impair her power of battery or engine. "She was on fire several times; was struck by 240 shot or shells; "and, singular to say, only lost 29, while her second, just by, lost "70 men. The *Albion* suffered still more, and in an hour was "towed out, crippled, and on fire in more than one place, with a "loss of 81 men. The crews of the *London* and *Arethusa* fared "rather better, but the ships nearly as ill; and they, too, remained "in station but a little time after the *Albion*. The *Queen* was "driven off soon after she got into her new position, in great "danger; and the *Rodney* had the bare satisfaction of getting "aground and afloat after experiencing some damage."

"The value of the small works on the cape and bluffs, was "clearly defined in these results; being above the dense cloud of "smoke that enveloped the ships and the lower forts, their aim "was not embarrassed, while the seamen labored under the diffi-"culty of firing, with an inconvenient elevation, at objects that "they saw but seldom, and then but dimly and briefly. As a "consequence, three line-of-battle ships and a frigate were driven "off very shortly and in great peril, and a fourth badly cut up; "while the *Agamemnon* lay opposed to one of the heaviest sea-"forts with two tiers of casemates, and at the end of five hours "came off with comparatively little loss."

Whatever superiority of effect the batteries on the heights may have had (and we have so few details about these works that we can draw no sure conclusion from this mere naked statement of damages received by the vessels), it evidently was not for want of being *hit* often enough (smoke or no smoke), that the "Agamemnon" escaped with so little injury. She "was struck by 240 shot "and shells;" and it is only due to the inefficiency of the projectiles by which she was struck, that she was not destroyed.

With respect to the damages received by Fort Constantine, I quote again from Dahlgren, at length:

"The distance of the *Agamemnon* and *Sanspareil* from Fort "Constantine (17th October, 1854), was assumed to be about 800 "yards; Lord Raglan states it to have been rather less. These "two ships could bring to bear about 87 guns, and the firing from "them probably lasted some four hours. There can be no doubt "that it inflicted much damage, for the Russian commander-in-"chief admits it in his official report; but not sufficient to impair "the strength of the masonry, and far short of effecting a breach "in it."

"At Bomarsund, the results were rather different:—Three "32-pdrs. of 42 cwt. (guns of inferior weight), were landed from "a ship's spar deck, and placed in battery at 950 yards from the "North Tower—the masonry of good quality and 6½ feet thick. "In eight hours, the wall between two embrasures was cut "through from top to bottom, offering a practicable breach, to "effect which 487 shot and 45 shells were fired,* being at the "rate of one round from the battery in rather less than a minute; "or, from each gun, one in 2¾ minutes. The Tower surrendered."

"It seems almost incredible that three pieces should be able "to accomplish fully that which eighty-seven pieces utterly failed "to do, the distances from the object being alike—particularly "when it is considered that many of the latter were of greater "calibre, and most of them employed much heavier charges where "the calibres were similar. The guns of the ship, if fired at the "same rate as those of the battery, which was not unusually "rapid, (one round in two and three-fourth minutes,) would have "discharged some seven thousand seven hundred shot and shells "in the course of the four hours, supposing no interruption: a "number of which, if properly applied, would appear, from the "results of three guns, to have been sufficient to breach the wall "of the fort in fourteen places; whereas they did not effect a single "breach, which is abundant proof of the lack of accuracy. They "must either have been dispersed over the surface of the fort, or "else missed it altogether, and this could have been due only to "a want of the precision which was attained by the battery. "The constantly preferred complaint of motion in the ships was "not to be urged, because on the day of cannonading Sevastopol, "there was scarcely a breath of wind, and the ships were too large "to be easily moved by the swell, unless very considerable. That "the fort did no greater damage to the ships, than it received from "them, proves no more than that its fire was quite as illy directed, "and the calibres too low. It is said that the *Agamemnon* was "struck in the hull by two hundred and forty shot and shells, "which must have been but a small portion of what was fired,

* Report of General Neil, Commanding Engineers.

"though sufficient to be decisive if, as already observed, the "calibre had been heavier."

A number of projectiles sufficient to produce fourteen "practicable breaches" if thrown by a land battery, here failed, not only to produce a single breach, but even "to impair the strength of the masonry."

Commander Dahlgren, indeed, deprecates the "want of precision;" but that degree of precision by which a breach is effected by a land battery, is *utterly unattainable* from a floating structure, and the perfect calm which prevailed on this occasion cannot be counted on, in general, and even the *swell* in the calmest days is quite sufficient to disperse the projectiles from a floating battery, at four hundred and five hundred yards, far and wide.*

I have said that, as to the contest of *ordinary naval* means, or fleets, with fortifications, the question has, long since, been practically settled.

The following extract from Grivel will show how the matter is regarded even by those who believe that fortifications *may* be successfully attacked by naval means *specially* adapted to the objects.

"If the coast defences are at the same level, or can be *com-*
"*manded* by the floating artillery; if the depth of water permits
"to combat them separately and to approach at half-point-blank
"distance, (that is 300 or 400 metres,) we would still say to the
"ships, however well-armed we suppose them:

"Never attack without an imperious and absolute necessity."

"But if these works occupy positions which command the sea
"while they reciprocally sustain each other; if sub-marine
"obstacles, or other causes, oblige the floating artillery to main-
"tain a greater distance, we do not hesitate to say to ships:"

"Keep off, the match is too unequal—but"—
"Bring up your siege floating-batteries."

"For then will be the time to substitute these formidable machines
"of war, and their artillery of great penetration, for the vulner-
"able sides and guns of less range of ordinary vessels." Even in the most favorable case he can describe, he says to ships: "Attack not without an imperious and absolute necessity."

The question of *direct contest for superiority* between forts and naval armaments, will be narrowed down to this. If forts

* Commander Dahlgren commends the "Nelsonian vigor" of this "spirited and "brilliant episode enacted by the detached squadron." With all deference to so competent a judge, I cannot help remarking that if there was "Nelsonian vigor," there was no "Nelsonian" result. The trifling damage done to the Fort, was a poor compensation for the loss of over two hundred men, and the serious injuries all the vessels of this detached squadron received.

are to protect the channel (as they *usually* are) through which a fleet must pass to reach our ports or cities, or naval and military dèpôts, the fleet will either *run by*—or, if the works are too formidable—decline contest altogether:—but, *if the object of attack is sufficient to justify the preparation*—(*the great port and city of New York for instance*) and the defences are such as to invite the effort, the maritime enemy will provide these "formidable machines of war," and enter into *a direct contest with them*, with a view to their reduction.

I am now considering the latter branch of this subject, and think that I have made it clear, that so far as we have yet any experience, there is nothing to justify the apprehension that the masonry scarps of casemated batteries can be destroyed by the cannonade of floating-batteries. Of course, if such vessels are permitted, unopposed by the guns of the battery itself, to take their own time, and to expend unlimited quantities of projectiles, they *doubtless can batter down any wall.* So far as yet tested by experience, their bulwarks are not proof against eight-inch and ten-inch solid shot at 400 yards. *If* proof against such projectiles at 800 or 1,000 yards * it is a well-known fact in breaching, that the number of projectiles necessary, even from a land battery, increases enormously with increase of distance. How much more from a *floating structure*, which cannot maintain any such concentration of fire, at such a distance, as is necessary to cause serious injury to well-constructed walls! Those, however, who believe in such operations, will probably contend that nothing analogous to producing a "breach" is necessary, but that embrasures will be destroyed, and guns dismounted, and gunners disabled by embrasure shots and splinters from the masonry cheeks, or by fragments of broken projectiles.

This subject has not been overlooked by the corps whose duty it is to make such constructions. A series of experiments was commenced five years ago at West Point by General Totten, Chief Engineer, and taken up again in 1855, for *this very purpose* of determining the best kind of embrasure, and the necessary thickness of the scarp, to resist these modern projectiles. The results have been published † and are open to the examination of

* I think it somewhat discreditable to the inventive resources of those whose duty it is to construct and perfect artillery, that this question of a shot-proof vessel should be an open one. The quantity (and therefore the thickness) of the iron sheathing, is limited for the floating-battery. I know no *necessary* limit to the calibre or weight of the projectile used against it, or why we should now stop at ten-inches, when the navy has already successfully introduced an eleven-inch gun, capable of throwing a solid shot.—The eleven-inch shot weighs 1-3 more than the ten-inch.—I shall allude to this subject of large calibres for sea-coast batteries in another place. See Appendix "D."

† "Casemate Embrasures, Totten," being No. 6 of "Papers of Practical Engineering," published by the Engineer Department.

every one. They may be briefly summed up in the following quotations:

"A thickness there of five feet has been assumed in our "constructions, and satisfies all these conditions well." (Alluding to the interior arrangement of the casemate with reference to the handling of the gun, &c., &c.) "But it has been a question of "interest, increasing with the growing calibre of naval armaments, "whether this thickness is now sufficient. And it was in con- "sequence thereof that some very severe firing was directed "against our second target. The gun was a ten-inch Columbiad, "placed within 114 yards, firing solid balls, weighing 128 lbs., "with a charge of 18 lbs. of powder."

"The general conclusion from these trials is, that, whether of "cement concrete, of bricks, or of hard stones, the portion of the "wall at, and around each embrasure, having the thickness of "five feet only, should be no larger than is indispensable for the "adaptation of the gun and carriage to the embrasure; if "restricted to a small area, this thickness will suffice—not other- "wise."

"The thickness of five feet will resist a number of these balls, "impinging in succession on that space, provided the bond expand "promptly, above, below, and on each side, into a thickness "greater by some 2 1-2 feet, or 3 feet, or more. Were the wall "no thicker generally than five feet, being re-inforced only by "piers some 15 feet apart, it would soon be seriously damaged "by battering at short distances with such calibres."

"To repeat: the scarp at the embrasure may be safely made "of the thickness of five feet, provided the thickness immediately "above, below, and on the sides, be increased considerably. The "space required to be of about this thickness, to accommodate "advantageously the gun and carriage, is so small, that it may be "said to be part of the thicker surrounding mass, by which it "really is supported in its resistance."

And with regard to the embrasure, it is stated:

"Our experiments show that wrought-iron is the best material "for insertion as above mentioned; and that a thickness of "wrought-iron, of eight-inches, solidly backed with masonry, will "resist an eight-inch solid ball, fired with 10 1-4 lbs. of powder "from a distance of 200 yards. It is necessary, as is also shown "by the firings, that the plates of iron should have considerable "breadth to prevent heavy balls from forcing themselves in "between the inner edge and the masonry, thereby crowding the "plate edgewise into the throat."

From these results an embrasure has been devised by the Chief Engineer, and sanctioned by the War Department, having wrought-iron throat-plates 8 inches thick (capable of resisting the impact of an 8-inch solid shot, from 200 yards distance), and

the whole surrounding structure of granite-blocks, of large dimensions, bonded together, and into the adjacent thick parts of the wall, in the strongest manner that such a structure can be made. Those who deny the capability of such a construction, to resist *sufficiently* the projectiles of an hostile armament, should, at least, *prove* that their incredulity is justifiable, by experiments as elaborate as those I have referred to.

But the discussion is cut short, at once, by the following paragraph from the report:

"Were it not for the vastly greater cost, the whole scarp "might be faced with iron—indeed might be made of iron only; "but, until there shall be much stronger reasons than now exist, "or are now anticipated, for believing that well-constructed "masonry batteries may be breached by naval broadsides, the "cheaper construction may be safely followed—especially as, "should such a necessity ever arise, they may be externally "plated with iron."

If the necessity arises—if there shall hereafter be "stronger "reasons than now exist, or are now anticipated," for giving still greater strength to the surrounding wall—the alternative is open to us, as to those who construct the floating-battery, (*without* the objection of weight, so very difficult to overcome in that structure), to coat it (about the embrasures, or further, if necessary), with iron plates.

Those who are curious on the subject of "Embrasures," and of the risks to which the gunners behind them are exposed, would do well to examine the work referred to.

They will find, among other things, that while some of the *modern* European works present an *exterior* opening of 54 square feet (in which area, owing to the flaring cheeks, nearly all the small projectiles are reflected through the throat, while large ones are broken and their fragments hurled within), no embrasure has been constructed in the United States, since 1815, having an exterior opening exceeding 10 or 11 square feet; and that the model embrasure of 1855, *practically* reduces the opening to that of the throat, which is *but* $3\frac{9}{16}$ *square feet*,—an object not much larger than the muzzle of a large gun. The security of the gunners behind this embrasure is as great, probably, as it is practicable to give *anywhere*;*—it is probably *greater* than in an open barbette battery.

The question of the capacity—actual and possible—of "masonry-casemated castles," to resist the fire of a hostile armament,

* A simple expedient, advocated by one of our officers, and partially practiced in Europe, to *raise* the embrasure so that all embrasure shot would pass over the heads of the gunners (as in the barbette battery), would, in a great degree, do away with the danger of the "embrasure shot" of all kinds, and with the necessity of grape-proof "shutters," applied to the new embrasure.

need not be pursued further. When we bear in mind that the hostile "floating batteries," of whatever description, will themselves be exposed to the most formidable projectiles that can be thrown from shore batteries,—that when they choose to come to "close quarters," to attempt to breach, *their* "embrasures" present openings (see Paper No. 6, before referred to) through which deluges of grape, canister, and musket balls can be poured upon the gunners;* and consider what experience has so far shown, and reason has taught us, with regard to the casemate,—we need not be under apprehension that our casemated works will be battered down; nor doubt that they will, as they did in Russia, answer the important purposes for which they were designed.

It only remains to show the *necessity* of such works. It, in general, costs much less to place a gun behind an earthen parapet, than to build a masonry sructure covered with bomb-proof arches, in which to mount it.† All authorities agree that an open barbette battery (Grivel's very forcible admission has been quoted), on a low site, and to which vessels can approach within 300 or 400 yards, is utterly inadmissible. It may safely be said, that in nine cases out of ten, the sites which furnish the efficient raking and cross fires upon the channels, are exactly of this character; and indeed it very often happens that there are *no others*.‡

When such sites *are* found, it rarely happens that they afford room for sufficient number of guns in open batteries.§ Hence the necessity of putting them tier above tier, which involves, of course, the casemated structure. Such works furnishing from their lower tier, a low, rasing fire, and (if of several tiers) a plunging fire from

* Grivel seems to think that, as to embrasure shot, the floating and land battery are on equal terms; but the embrasure of the floating structure cannot be made as small as that of the casemate; nor can the expedient of "shutters," or of raising the embrasures above the heads of the men, be resorted to.

† The discrepancy in cost is not, however, by any means, what this naked statement would make it appear. A gun behind an open parapet is exposed to being disabled or spiked, by a mere boat's crew taking the battery by surprise. *Some degree* of defensive strength is necessary in all cases; and in *some* cases the necessary strength involves (independent of other causes) the construction of a regular fortification. The open earthen batteries of Lieutenant Morton, rest on enclosed bastions of masonry, each of which is larger than most of our harbor works.

‡ Take the case of Sebastopol, about which there *are* heights. None of them (Commander Dahlgren's remarks have already been quoted), furnish proper sites for defending the harbor. Cronstadt offered no other sites whatever than artificial ones in, or islands almost level with, the water. Our own harbors generally offer the same illustration of the absence of favorable sites for open batteries.

§ Staten Island, at the Narrows, furnishes an apt illustration. The heights here are of about 120 feet. From the *open batteries* of Fort Tompkins, on the summit, heavy guns will rake the approach, and have a plunging fire upon passing vessels. *The entire face* of the heights (so far as the United States properly extends) is, or is to be, girdled with *open earth batteries*, at heights of 60 and 45 feet. We have here about as many guns as *can be* ranged in *such* batteries. But it is not deemed enough; nor is the character of the fire such as to dispense with the numerous, and close, and *rasing* fires to be obtained from the sites at the water's edge, on which Fort Richmond is already built, and another similar "casemated castle" *is to be built*.

their barbettes, offer as favorable emplacements for guns as can be contrived, and afford to their gunners a degree of security quite as great as *can* be given to men thus engaged.*

On subjects which have a mere speculative importance, there is no danger in giving rein to speculation; but on those of such real and intense practical importance as the security against hostile aggression, of the great city and port of New York, it is not admissible to set aside the experience of the past, or the opinions of the best minds who have devoted themselves to such subjects. A means of defence, sanctioned by its being confided in to protect the great ports of Europe—which *has* protected the great ports of Russia against the most formidable naval armament that ever floated on the ocean, has a claim upon our confidence which mere criticism cannot diminish; and a claim to be adhered to in place of all new "systems," until time and trial shall have *necessitated* (not merely justified) the change.

If, then, we refer to the practice of other nations, to find what has been judged necessary for the defence of important ports,—to experience, to find how such defensive systems have stood the test of actual trial,—we may draw useful conclusions with regard to what is now required to defend New York. We shall find at *Sebastopol*—a narrow harbor, which owed its importance to its being the great naval dépôt of Russia on the Black sea†—an array of 700 guns, about 500 of which were placed in five "masonry-casemated" works (several of them of great size), and the remainder in open batteries.‡ These defensive works fulfilled their object, and sustained the attack of the allied fleet, on the 17th of October, 1854, without sensible damage.

The facility with which sea-ports are attacked by fleets—the enormous preparations required—the great risks encountered in landing a besieging army on the coast of a formidable enemy (while, for protection against the *former* species of attack, costly works are necessary, and against the latter, field works and men can, in emergency, afford protection), naturally caused the Russians to make these water defences their *first* object. Yet, though almost unprotected on the land side, Sebastopol resisted, for a whole year, an attack on that quarter; and illustrated how, with

* The criticism as to their *capacity* for men and stores, is scarcely deserving of notice. When they are merely water-batteries (as most of them are), they require quarters enough for men to work the guns (5 or 6 to each piece), and ammunition storage enough for one or two protracted cannonades. In the mere service of the guns there is no crowding whatever.

† An important point surely; but how small its importance, and the interests involved in its defence, compared with *New York!*

‡ It is worthy remark, that the only battery *mentioned* as silenced by the allied fire, during the cannonade of the 17th of October, 1854, is that of the Quarantine Fort, an "open barbette,"—silenced, as Grivel says, "malgré l'abri de son parapet en terre" (notwithstanding the shelter of its earthen parapet.)

plenty of men and material, an energetic and effectual *land defence* may be improvised, where the *sea defence* is provided for, as thoroughly as it was at that place.*

Let Cronstadt be another example. Great as was the importance of its defence to Russia, it was not greater,—it was by no means *as great*, as that of New York to our own country. This port, and military and naval dépôt, was defended (in its main approach) by upwards of 600 guns,† 500 of which were mounted in five "masonry-casemated" works; the remainder in an open barbette battery, which enfiladed the main channel. This number is formidable in itself; yet the same number mounted in New York harbor would not afford anything like such a formidable defence as was found at Cronstadt, owing to its great area, and long line of approach, compared with the latter.‡

These works fulfilled their object. They protected the great port and dépôt of Cronstadt and the capital of the empire from invasion. For two successive years did the mighty armaments of France and England threaten; but they were over-awed by the frowning array of "casemated castles" which presented itself, and declined the contest.§

Let us turn our eyes now to the great naval dèpôt of France. After the almost incredible expenditure lavished here, in creating a harbor facing the shores of her great rival, England, and an equally profuse expenditure in providing all that constitutes a great naval dèpôt, we may suppose that the best means, without regard to cost, which the science of man could devise, would be employed here, to make this great seat of naval power secure against the formidable means of attack possessed by the great maritime power most likely to be the assailant. The means there employed are (so far as regards mere *harbor* defence) precisely the same (viz., casemated works in several tiers, combined with open batteries where the locations are favorable); and the application of means is the same as we have found so successful in Russia,—the same which constitute the system of harbor defence of New York.

* See Appendix "E."

† Besides 120 guns on two ships of war, stationed so as to rake the approach.

‡ For a more detailed account of the defences of Sebastopol, see Appendix "B."

§ A special armament was being fitted out in England, *expressly* to attack Cronstadt, had the war lasted another year. It consisted of several hundred "floating-batteries," gun-boats, mortar-vessels, &c., &c. It would have been interesting in a professional point of view, to have seen the result; but it is quite doubtful after all, whether the Allies would have taken the "bull by the horns." They would probably have directed their attack upon the shoal-water approaches between the Finland shore and the island of Cronstadt.

PART II.

Let us now consider what, in the present state of the art of war, and in the light of the experience we now have, is required for the defence of the port and city of New York.

In commencing this paper, I have ventured to call this problem a modified and enlarged one; the course of the previous discussion will have shown, however, that I do not believe that we know of anything particularly *new* in the *means* to be employed. It is rather in the *amount* and *character* of the armaments to which New York will be exposed, which involves a new consideration of the amount and arrangement of defensive means.

In reviewing the recent European war, we are struck with the facility with which immense bodies of troops were transported and maintained in a distant country, which of itself furnished nothing. France shipped to the Crimea upwards of 300,000 men, and England some 90 or 100,000. We cannot doubt, therefore, that either of these powers *can* suddenly equip a large army, transport it over the ocean, 3000 miles, to our shores, and maintain it a year or more in a hostile attitude.

(The question of being able to *maintain a footing on our shores*, is quite another thing.)

We are struck, too, by the immense power of *creation* possessed by these powers (particularly England), in calling forth all manner of warlike military and naval constructions. It seemed as if the government had but to *will*, and the immense manufacturing establishments and ship-yards of England, were capable of responding to the most unlimited demands, in the briefest possible time. Taught, by the experience of two seasons, the inutility of *ordinary* naval means against the Russian defences in the Baltic, a flotilla of several hundred vessels—gun-boats of different sizes, bearing pieces of the most formidable calibres, mortar vessels, "floating-batteries," despatch vessels, &c., all propelled by steam —were constructed in an incredibly short space of time.*

Such flotillas could be created with the same facility and sent to our shores, if there should be found a sufficient *motive* for it.

* A brief account of these vessels, taken from an interesting paper, "Notes and "Observations on the Review at Spithead, by Commander W. M. Walker, U. S. "Navy," will be found in Appendix "C."

The third point which attracts attention, is the peculiarly *maritime* character of the war. It was not by marching armies into the interior of the enemy's territory, but by assailing his maritime seats of population, wealth and power, that the war was prosecuted; and one of their great maritime depots became the true seat of war, about which its issue was decided.

The lesson to be derived by ourselves is too obvious to be dwelt upon. *Our own great maritime* places would be the points at which alone an European enemy could hope to strike *great blows; New York* pre-eminently. If it is left undefended, or is inadequately defended, its immense commerce, its rich depots of wealth and military and naval resources, the lives and property of its citizens, will be, throughout *the whole period* of the war, at an unpitying enemy's mercy; and the national honor will suffer an indelible stain, by such a degradation of its great commercial emporium. If defended as it should be, *its defences must be calculated to grapple with such armaments, as we know can and will be brought against it;* and upon the success of the contest, immense consequences—perhaps, as at Sebastopol, the issue of the war—will depend.

The Boards of Engineers who have recently had under consideration, portions of the defensive system of New York, have not been insensible that great additional strength was now required, over what had been considered sufficient in former years. But they have never had time (each member being charged with onerous individual duties) to take that patient survey of the *whole subject* which it requires. Moreover they have only been called upon to decide projects of particular works; and I may add, that it is only quite recently that we have had the means of taking this re-survey of our wants, with the full light which a perfect knowledge of the events of the recent European war alone could give us.

It would be presumptuous in me, to say exactly what new works, or what new arrangements are required; but I *can* say, with confidence, that the security of New York requires a vast addition to what now exists; that it demands their *prompt execution;* and, enlightened by previous labors of the Boards of Engineers, and by the opinions of officers of experience, can point out, in a general way, what is necessary, or, at least, what I believe to be so.

First—The Narrows is the great avenue of approach to New York, and the shores being there barely one mile apart, they furnish the means of a most formidable defence. I have before alluded to the difficulty of, by mere array of batteries, absolutely sealing a channel against *the rapid passage* of vessels. The true principle, therefore, for the defence of an object, like New York,

of such importance that the mere *passage* of the batteries would be risked, is, not only to make those batteries of the most formidable nature, but so to array batteries that the *entire waters*, not only of the channel of approach, but those in which the enemy must lie, in his after offensive operations, shall be under their fire.* The Board of Engineers has already considered the nature and extent of additional works at the Narrows; and, so far as the first condition, of a formidable array of batteries is concerned, I think they have met all the requisites. They have decided that there should be, at this passage, batteries sufficient to concentrate a fire of 300 guns upon *every point of a vessel's path within range.* When we consider the character of the armament intended for these works,† it will be admitted that the passage, under the most favorable circumstances, will be a thing of no ordinary risk. Combined with the use of *obstructions*, either floating or fixed, and of floating defences on our part, the defence can be made of the most formidable character.

But such an array of batteries does not now exist. To accomplish it, we require, on Staten Island, besides Fort Richmond, (nearly completed) the completion of Fort Tompkins (just commenced); the construction of another casemated battery south of Fort Richmond, (for which plans are proposed) and the extension of the earthen batteries. Fort Tompkins will cost about $650,000, and the new battery and earthen works about as much more; or $1,300,000 in all, for the works *yet* to be constructed on Staten Island.

This is but for the Staten-Island side of the Narrows. To provide the concentration of 300 guns upon the passage, and to command the waters of Gravesend Bay, the works on the Long-Island side must be enlarged by extending batteries (either open or casemated) along the bluff below Fort Hamilton, and Fort Lafayette must be re-modelled. As the additional works on this side have not been planned, I can only say that I suppose that an expenditure of about $500,000 will be required on the Long-Island shore.

So much for the defences of the Narrows; but to fulfill the condition that an enemy's fleet shall be kept under fire wherever he may be,‡ one or more works are required to fill the gap between the Narrows and the interior line of works, on Bedlow's and Governor's Islands. At least one such work should be built on Robbins' reef—a site about midway between the Narrows and Governor's Island, which rakes the approach through the Narrows

* See Appendix "D."

† 8″ and 10″ Columbiads, and 42-pounders for hot shot, and 8-inch sea-coast howitzers for the shorter ranges.

‡ The fulfillment of this condition would be completed by throwing up temporary batteries along the East and North Rivers, in the city and upon the opposite shores.

and commands the outlets of the "Kills." A work on this site may be roughly estimated at $500,000.

The foregoing are what, I think, are imperatively demanded for the Narrows approach to the city. They include (Fort Richmond being nearly completed,) the construction of *two* new works on Staten Island, Fort Tompkins, (just commenced) and the new projected casemated battery; of additional works at Fort Hamilton, and the re-modelling of Fort Lafayette; and the construction of at least *one* new work, on Robbins' Reef, and an expenditure of from two to three millions of dollars.

But to prevent the occupation of the outer harbor and a disembarkation in Gravesend Bay, and march on Brooklyn, other works are required, and they may be so arranged, while they fulfill these objects as to add greatly to the risks an enemy would encounter in reaching New York with his fleet.

To prevent disembarkation in Gravesend Bay, a work seems indispensable on the point of Coney Island. Such a work, in conjunction with the proposed new batteries at Fort Hamilton, would sweep the waters of Gravesend Bay, and take up fire upon a fleet attempting the passage of the Narrows, at a lower point than the Narrows batteries, crossing fire with them. It may indeed, in conjunction with another work to be mentioned hereafter, be made to constitute *another* and outer line of defence to the Narrows approach.

The work on Sandy Hook, authorized by Congress, and just being commenced, is intended, mainly, to prevent the occupation and *use* of the outer bay by an enemy's fleet.

It does not thoroughly seal all the entrances to that bay; but if the works I have described exist above, he will not encounter the fire of Sandy Hook with no greater object than merely to enter the bay. To make a more perfect defence of these outer waters, however, a work on the "West Bank" is desirable, which would command the mouth of all the lesser entrances to the outer harbor, and, in conjunction with the Coney-Island work, form the outer line of the Narrows defences, already mentioned. Perhaps, too, a work on the Romer shoal which should co-operate with Sandy Hook, and command the "Swash" and "East" channels, might be judged expedient.

The work on Sandy Hook will cost $2,000,000; and as to those I have mentioned, it can only be stated that they would require something like $2,000,000 more.

The narrow passage around Staten Island through the Kills can be passed by light-draught gun-boats and similar craft. It can be easily defended by obstructions or shore batteries; but whichever means are resorted to, some shore works sufficiently strong to endure an assault are necessary. I only point out the fact, without attempting to indicate what they should be.

The East-River approach is defended by the formidable work of Fort Schuyler. Another work opposite to it, on Willett's Point, is deemed necessary; and the two will, with such auxiliary means as can be easily provided in time of war, complete the defence. The work on Willett's Point may be set down at the same cost as Fort Schuyler, $800,000.

I have now indicated in a very general way, what I suppose necessary to put New York in a satisfactory state of security. I have shown, or have attempted to show, not only that it was *not* now in such a state, but that works requiring some six or eight millions of dollars are imperatively demanded. The sum is large, it is true; but it is only about *the amount of revenue collected here in two months.* If I have convinced you, as I have tried to do, and as I certainly believe, that in our next war with a great maritime power, more important issues will be involved in the adequate defence of New York than in almost any other preparation, defensive or offensive, we can make, *then*, I shall not fear that you or the *nation* will consider the millions required disproportionate to the object. I believe that the people of the United States can and will be made to understand that the defence of New York is a *national*, and not a *local* question; and as such will be willing to provide for it.

If I am asked when these works should be undertaken, I answer that I consider that all those that involve the defence of the Narrows are so immensely important to New York that they should be commenced *immediately*, and carried on with the largest appropriations that can be advantageously applied, to completion; and simultaneously with them, the work on Coney Island. These works, (Fort Tompkins, the new water-battery on Staten Island—the additional works at Fort Hamilton—and the work on Coney Island) will cost about $2,000,000; and I urgently recommend that at least $500,000 be asked from Congress for them.

The works just mentioned, (with the work on Sandy Hook, also in progress) would place this approach in a respectable state of defence; and the other works in the outer bay could be commenced at a later period; but *all* that are decided by competent authority *to be necessary* should be built as soon as possible.

A complete view of the dangers and defences of New York requires some allusion to the subject of an invasion by land, and particularly from Long Island. The idea of such a danger has nothing whatever of novelty in it. That the British army actually *did* land in Gravesend Bay—defeat the Continental forces under Gen. Washington, at Brooklyn, and capture New York, is well known. That, to prevent the repetition of such an operation during the last war, a large body of militia was called out, is equally well known; and the liability to a repetition of such an attack has

been dwelt upon in almost every official paper treating of the defences of New York.

The Chief Engineer, General Totten, proposed to secure the city from danger in this particular quarter by an *outer barrier;* and if the outer bay could be *effectually closed*, of course the danger would be removed. But so to close it will require works* which, if built at all, will not probably be very soon.

The subject has been before almost every Board of Engineers that has had the defence of New York under consideration from 1816 to the present time. They have presented no formal plan that I recollect, for land defences on Long Island, (at least not of late years) for they have always found other demands concerning the defences of New York far more pressing; and have probably thought, too, that while the general character of the defence was sufficiently obvious, every year that elapsed would alter the details of the problem.

There are two or three very broad principles bearing on this subject, which I think every one will assent to.

First: A landing in the face of such a force as could speedily be concentrated (or rather such as always would be *at hand* in New York) is an operation of *great risk* as well as great labor, requiring special means and arrangements. *No enemy will take this course so long as he can with his fleet,* (or with vessels specially adapted to the object) *reach the city and effect his object without a landing.* While, therefore, this latter operation is open to an enemy, while he can with his fleet, or the gun-boats, or the floating-batteries of his fleet, force his way within range of the city from his shell-guns or curved fire, the question of danger from land attacks sinks into utter insignificance.

The works to prevent this latter operation are of great magnitude, as I have endeavored to show in the course of this paper; require large amounts of money, and much time to complete. Those to prevent the former (land attack) are of a comparatively trivial character. I concur, in fact, with the opinion expressed by yourself, Sir, in your Annual Report, that (at least until the *harbor* defences are completed) nothing but earth works, to be thrown up in time of war, are necessary.†

Second: All the arguments which opposers to our system of coast defences have of late years brought forward, bear with *their full force*, upon our defensive strength *in this relation; not at all*, upon the degree of strength required for *harbor defences.* In the words of a Maury, if the "greatest army that ever was led into

* It is not anticipated that the work on Sandy Hook can alone close this bay.

† I consider, however, that the work on Coney Island should be *immediately* built, to prevent a landing in Gravesend Bay, or on Coney Island; but this is not included in the category of *land* defences, as advocated by others.

"battle by the greatest captain" were to land on Long Island, "and be disembarking his last piece of artillery before he was "discovered—these railroads, the power of steam, with the aid "of lightning, would enable the government, before he could "reach the heights of Brooklyn, to have there in waiting and "ready to receive him, and beat him back into the sea, a force "two to one greater than his, however strong;" and Major W. H. Chase, (in a quotation already given,) has expressed opinions if not quite so strong as these, somewhat similar. It is not necessary to embrace the particular views of either of these officers to acknowledge that there is force in their arguments.

Third. The *great danger* to New York and its dependencies, from this kind of an attack, is from the safe and convenient landing at Gravesend, and the short line of march thence to Brooklyn. Should we find ourselves engaged in war, with no other defence in this quarter than those now existing, prompt and energetic measures would have to be taken to improvise a defence against this danger; and doubtless prompt and energetic measures could and *would* be taken.

With the work I propose on Coney Island, however, this landing becomes unavailable, and the danger of land attack on Brooklyn or New York becomes comparatively insignificant. A *landing*, as before remarked, in the face of the dense and warlike population of New York, augmented as the numerical force of its defenders may be, in a day or two, by overwhelming numbers from other quarters, is one of the most dangerous operations of war. It will not be undertaken on the *open sea-shore* of Long Island, where at any moment the disembarked force would be liable to have its communication with its fleet cut off. It would only be made from Long Island Sound, whence a march of fifteen or twenty miles, at the shortest, would be necessary to reach Brooklyn. At whatever rate such a danger may be estimated, it is sufficient to say that in twenty-four hours after a declaration of war (if thought necessary) an army of 50,000 men may be *entrenched* on the line of approach to Brooklyn.

The work on Willett's Point will, by no means, have an insignificant bearing on such defence. To "leave it behind" is *not* simply to leave a "fortification" in the enemy's rear; it is to have in his rear, *an entrenched "tête-de-pont,"* whence in twenty-four hours, *an overwhelming force may be thrown from the New-York side, upon his rear, cutting him off from his fleet.*

In conclusion, I would say in this connection, that the policy of our government, and of the Engineer Department, has always *been* (and I conceive, always *should* be) *first*, to close all the great approaches *by water*, leading to our dock-yards, commercial cities, &c., and to locate their defences in such a manner as to *force any landing that may be attempted, to as great a distance as possible.*

The defence against approaches by an army landing, must be *by our troops*, (surely if the nation and the people have in themselves *any* inherent power of self-defence—it is *here* they can meet the foe, and "beat him back into the sea,") with the assistance of temporary works, and all the expedients of engineering talent and skill, on *such route* as an enemy may have selected. But to leave the coast and construct a girdle of forts about any of our cities as they *now* exist, would be as wise as to have constructed permanent defences along Brooklyn and Harlem heights, where they were made in 1814 and '15; now within the cities, and to be traced or known only from old maps and plans. Fort Greene, one of the commanding sites of the Brooklyn line of 1814–15, has been not only occupied by the city, but its commanding eminence levelled. Nothing short of the power of a despotic government, with ability to take possession of hundreds of acres (and dwellings,) and *forbid the erection* of any structures either upon the sites or *within gun-shot of them*, could accomplish the scheme of either establishing a girdle of works about Brooklyn, or secure permanently the sites for them.

The fact that sites, deemed eligible *now*, are being built upon, is the best proof that they are becoming no longer so.

Whether these propositions are admitted or not, it is most certain that, *at present*, the great "dangers" of New York are through the *inadequately defended water approaches*. It is to *these* dangers I most urgently call your attention, and the attention of Congress and of the people of the United States; for it is not a question of local, but of *national* concern.

This paper has swollen to a length unanticipated by me in commencing it; but I have judged it imperative, at a period in our growth as a nation, and in the history of our relations with the other great powers of the world, when, I conceive, the subject of security to our great cities and ports has acquired more than ordinary urgency, and when at the same time the very principles on which such security can be obtained are called in question—to review, *thoroughly*, the whole subject, glancing at the arguments of *past* years to see how they have been justified by the progress of events, and discussing at length the occurrences of the recent European war which bear on this subject. If I shall convince you that there is urgent and immediate necessity for prosecuting in the most energetic manner all the *defensive* works now authorized by Congress for the defence of New York and of commencing *new ones* without delay—and if, by means of this paper, I shall awaken the attention, not only of the people of New York, but of *all* who take the "safety, honor, and welfare," of their country to heart, to the importance of the subject, my object will be accomplished.

APPENDIX.

[A.]

The following description of the manner of construction and materials used in some of the Russian and Prussian works (Bomarsund among others) is interesting; and will illustrate the degree of authority belonging to the assertion just quoted. It is derived from authentic sources:

The masonry is described as of boulders, with one end broken off to form the face; then the sides broken, to give beds and builds of every variety of shape, varying in the number of sides, their length, and, hence, angles made with each other. No stone other than the Finland granite, scattered over the surface in boulders, is available in a large part of northern Europe. These are used for the face of the wall, the filling being brick or other masonry. The result is a facing of most excellent material for durability as to time, but very inferior and of little or no strength in bond. The stones are left with rounded surfaces on the back, and present no bond of any value, and in size vary as they were picked from the fields, every stone being worked to its largest dimensions for a face, and cut to fit the adjacent ones previously laid.

Thus, for example, the face of the wall is formed. The joints perpendicular to the face, as a necessary consequence, vary in depth, according to the size of the boulders, and the bed into which it is being prepared to be laid; varying from 6 to 12 inches in a work witnessed under construction. None of the stones could be considered as large; altogether an exceedingly indifferent character of masonry to resist artillery, although good against weather and escalade. Such were the Bomarsund towers and casemated water-battery. At Cronstadt the masonry of the scarps and the water fronts is superior to any masonry to be found in the fortifications of Europe; and equal in every respect to that in our dry-docks at Brooklyn and Norfolk. At Sebastopol it was very indifferent as to the size and quality of the material, though well put together, being of headers and stretchers, with horizontal beds and vertical joints; but in pieces from 8 to 12 inches rise, and 2 to 4 feet in length for the stretchers, and the mortar not very hard. The coping of the docks and sea-wall of the dock harbor was excellent, and of large blocks of Finland granite, and what appeared to be Quincy granite; but the scarps of the Malakoff, the crenated wall on the west of the city, and the harbor casemated forts, were very poor masonry, both in quality of material and its small size; the material not as good as the Connecticut sandstone in some of our old harbor defences.

[B.]

The following more detailed account of the defences of Cronstadt and Sebastopol, is derived from an authentic source:

The Russians gave their attention, first, to securing the dock-yards and establishment at Cronstadt. By permanent casemated batteries, upon precisely the same principles we have adopted (differing in some details only), they closed the main entrance against large and small vessels; and were adding, during the existence of the contest, to these casemated defences, in the construction of a new work on the shoal opposite Cronstadt (south side of main channel.) The narrow, circuitous channels through the shoals, from the island of Cronstadt to the Finland shore, were defended by hulk ships permanently anchored at advantageous positions; as was, likewise, the shoal water between the island of Cronstadt and the main land to the southward. A numerous flotilla of steam propellers and sailing gun-boats, with many boats propelled with oars, armed each with a heavy gun, together with many steam sloops of war, were ready to operate anywhere, about or on the shoals, their services would be most available at critical moments.

The city of Cronstadt, on the eastern end of the island, was enclosed by permanent fortifications.

On the western side, crossing the island, these works took in every building of the commercial city and naval dock-yards; but were so near as to have brought destruction upon the city and naval establishment, by any siege operations carried on against the permanent defences. To obviate this serious difficulty a line of entrenchments was thrown up across the island, far in advance of the permanent works. These entrenchments were armed with heavy ship's guns, having ditches commanded by concealed caponiers, fraised and palisaded.

Such were the defences of the main ship-channel to St. Petersburg and the naval establishment, against *floating* offensive operations. Within this line the city of St. Petersburg is approached only through shoal water and among islands.

All these channels were commanded by temporarily-constructed batteries, mounting from 6 to 12 heavy guns, on wrought-iron carriages.

But the city of St. Petersburg on the land, and the whole coast and shores from it, down to the enemy's anchorage, on the north and south, were bare of lines or entrenchments of any kind.

A large army was in camp south of St. Petersburg, ready to march at any moment, to oppose a landing, or meet any troops the Allies might venture to land. Both at Cronstadt and Sebastopol, as well as Sweaborg, Bomarsund and Riga, their defences were in progress of construction, or rather unfinished; those at Cronstadt being actually under construction, both in the dock-yard and casemated forts; but the land defences they

had the good sense to *omit, until* the great and open route *by water* had *been secured*. This latter object they had most successfully attained at Sebastopol, that resisted the combined attack of the most powerful armament Europe could bring to bear against fortifications; and the works thus prepared effectually served to protect the fleet, dock-yards, city, and all they were destined to secure. But time did not enable the Russians to carry out their plans to cover the land side of these harbor defences. On the west of the city they had a crenated scarp, which held out to the last against the French. Along the south they had nothing but the little Malakoff tower, of two tiers of loop-holes for infantry, and five guns in barbette —a work with a circular trace, the gorge not exceeding 27 feet radius (out to out), admitting of 5 loop-holes only on each side of the door. Temporary earthen works were hastily thrown up, on ground most advantageously formed for such a noble and gallant defence as the Russian engineer's skill enabled him to call into action; while the resources of an immense fleet enabled him to arm and equip his works.

A first, second, and even third line of defences, the two latter always in advance of their first, occupying positions on the crest of the dock-yard hills, the Russian engineers pushed forward to meet their allied enemy; but no permanent works of any kind existed to oppose the Allies on the south, saving the little, exposed, masonry Malakoff, the stone of which was no better than some of our best mortar, and was destroyed from a distance of more than 1500 yards, by the first battery constructed against it. There can be no doubt that the Russians labored under every disadvantage from the temporary character of their works; and it is very certain that neither the Redan nor Korniloff bastion (the Malakoff) would have been entered by a French or English soldier to the day the Russians evacuated them, had there existed either A MASONRY counterscarp, or scarp with suitable BOMB-PROOFS, for the Russian troops. Another winter's campaign would unquestionably have been necessary, had the works been of this more permanent character; and it may well be doubted whether the resources of the Allies could have equalled such a prolonged contest.

[C.]

The Floating-Batteries are of very uncouth and unwieldy appearance, partaking in model about equally of a canal boat and a galliot. In general, their construction is that of iron ships; the decks are of 9-inch plank resting upon 10½-inch beams, placed 1 foot 9 inches from centre to centre; the "top sides" are covered with 6-inch plank, over which, extending to 3 feet below the water-line, is a sheathing of wrought-iron plates, 14 feet long, 20 inches wide, and 4½ inches thick, each secured to the hull by 1¼-inch screw bolts. They are brig-rigged, are fitted with non-condensing engines and screw propellers, and can make, under steam alone, 4½ to 5 knots. They are pierced for 30 guns, and mount from 14 to 16 sixty-eights.

DIMENSIONS.

	Horse-power.	Length.	Extreme Breadth.	Depth.	Draft.
"Meteor".....	150	173	43.6	14.7	7.9
"Thunderbolt"...	200	186	48.6	18.6	6.6

The only vessel of this class which has been tested in action was under French colors in the attack upon Kinburn. She was struck in the hull 58 times, without receiving any other injury than the indentation of the plates to depths varying from one-fourth to one and one-fourth inches.* Of important particulars respecting the alleged invulnerability of these vessels, I could get no account, and must admit a want of faith in it.

The Mortar Boats are cutter-rigged vessels of about 70 tons, very much resembling in general form and appearance the "Anchor Hoy," which was formerly, and perhaps still may be, attached to the Norfolk Navy Yard. Their draft is five feet. Each mounts a 13-inch mortar.

Gun Boats.—The largest of these vessels are three-masted schooners, of fine models, of 800 tons, and 210 feet long, with engines of 350 horse-power, and a speed under steam of 10 to 11½ knots.

They have a crew of 100 men, and their armament consists of two 68-pounders, of 95 cwt., on pivots—one between the fore and main masts and one the forecastle—and four 32-pounders on truck carriages. The most note-worthy peculiarity of these craft is the arrangement of their boilers, which is as follows: Their light draft renders it impossible to place the

* See Dahlgren's account, p. 27 *et seq.*, *ante*. Nothing heavier than a 32-pound shot was fired by the Russian batteries at Kinburn.—(*Author's note.*)

boilers out of danger below the water-line, without occupying too much of the floor of the vessel; therefore they are furnished with two descriptions of boiler—the "service" and the "fighting" boiler. The first is of the usual form of British marine boiler; the latter, cylinder tubular. For ordinary service, both boilers are used; but in close action, the lower or fighting boilers only—these being sufficient to furnish rather more than half speed.

The Second-Class Gun Boats are schooners of 650 tons, and 180 feet long, with engines of 200 horse power, and a speed under steam, of nine knots. They are manned with eighty men, and mount, on pivots, one 68-pounder, 95 cwt., and one 32 of 65 cwt, and four 12-pounder howitzers.

The Third Class, the most numerous, are schooners of about 110 feet in length, with engines of 60 horse power, and a speed, under steam, of eight knots, with a draft of about 6½ feet; they have a crew of 40 men, and the same armament as the second class.

The Fourth Class are schooners of 80 feet in length, a draft of five feet, engines of 20 horse power, and a speed, under steam, of six knots, a crew of 30 men, and are armed, a part of them with one 68 pounder, and one 32-pounder; others with two 32-pounders.

The two latter classes are provided with movable shields of iron plate, bullet-proof, which are shipped at pleasure; raising the height of the bulwarks to about seven feet in case of having to force a passage defended by riflemen.

The engines of all these vessels are "non-condensing" "direct-acting," of great simplicity and compactness, and work to three times their nominal power.

They usually carry a pressure of 60 pounds; the "boilers" are tested to 180; and such is the fidelity with which the work has been executed, that no break-down or accident has occurred on board of any one of them.*

* "Notes and Observations on the Review at Spithead," by Commander M. M. Walker, U. S. Navy.

A very detailed account of these vessels (as also an immense mass of interesting matter, which would have been of great service to me in preparing this paper, but which I have been unable to avail myself of; though I have received much valuable information from its author) is contained in the able Report to the Secretary of War of Major R. Delafield, Corps of Engineers, one of the Commissioners sent to Europe, during the recent European war, by the Hon. Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, for the purpose of examining and reporting upon the state of the military art at a period deemed so favorable for observing its modern developments.

This Report, unfortunately for the cause of military science in this country, has not yet been published; neither has that of his able coadjutor, Major Mordecai, of the Ordnance Corps.

The Report of Capt. McLellan, the third Commissioner (from which an extract is made in Appendix "E"), was published more than a year since, and has been promptly appreciated by the military profession.

[D.]

The Engineers are not the inventors nor makers of ordnance. They can but apply to the best advantage such as is supplied to them.

It does strike me that its construction should, so far as it is intended for harbor defence, be studied exclusively in the light of its adaptability to that object, and without regard to *conformity* to other models. Large calibres are *imperatively* demanded for coast defence, nor is there any objection arising from the *weight* of the guns, which applies so strongly in naval use. Yet the navy have successfully introduced a gun (Dahlgren's 11-inch gun) which throws a solid shot one-third heavier than our 10-inch columbiad.

It is even reported that the Ordnance Department are about abandoning the use of *solid shot* in our 10-inch guns, as if against these new means of attack (iron-clad floating-batteries constructed *expressly* to batter on fortifications) a 10-inch shell could have any effect whatever.

If we must throw *shells*, at least let us throw them of such size, that they may have thickness enough not to break against any thickness of iron a vessel's side may oppose. Let us make them such that (to use the sportsman's phrase) "every shot shall be a bird."

The Turks have, for the defence of the Dardanelles, guns of 30 *inches* calibre, carrying a stone ball. I do not know whether there is any impossibility or impracticability in the construction of guns of this size; but I cannot see why a gun of greatly superior calibre to anything we now have, should not be made *expressly* for harbor defence.

Such guns could not be fired with the rapidity of smaller ones; perhaps too, like the Turkish guns, it would be found best to establish them on fixed lines of direction; but one such shot that *hits*, would be worth a hundred smaller ones. A 30-inch hole could not be plugged; and the explosion of a 30-inch shell would send a vessel to the bottom.

Of the capability of such guns to inflict injury and of the efficiency of batteries mounted with them, an opinion may be formed by the single instance, (so far as I know) that their qualities have been exhibited, viz: the retreat in 1807 of the fleet of Admiral Duckforth.

"The defences of the channel had been allowed to go to decay; but "few guns were mounted, and the forts were but partially garrisoned. In "Constantinople not a gun was mounted, and no preparations for defence "were made; indeed, previous to the approach of the fleet, the Turks had "not determined whether to side with the English or the French, and even "the French ambassador had the greatest difficulty in persuading them to "resist the demands of Duckforth.

"The British fleet consisted of six sail of the line, two frigates, two

"sloops, and several bomb-vessels, carrying eight hundred and eighteen "guns (besides those in the bomb-ships.)

"Admiral Duckforth sailed through the Dardanelles on the 19th of "February, 1807, with little or no opposition. This being a Turkish fes- "tival day, the soldiers of the scanty garrison were enjoying the festivities "of the occasion, and none were left to serve the few guns of the forts "which had been prepared for defence. But while the Admiral was "waiting on the sea of Marmora for the result of negotiations, or for a "favorable wind to make the attack upon Constantinople, the fortifications "of this city were put in order, and the Turks actively employed, under "French engineers and artillery officers in repairing the defences of the "Straits. Campbell, in his Naval History, says:—"Admiral Duckforth "now fully perceived the critical situation in which he was placed. He "might, indeed, succeed, should the weather become favorable, in bom- "barding Constantinople; but unless the bombardment should prove "completely successful in forcing the Turks to pacific terms, the injury he "might do to the city would not compensate for the damage which his fleet "must necessarily sustain. With this damaged and crippled fleet, he must "repass the Dardanelles, now rendered infinitely stronger than they were "when he came through them."

"Under these circumstances, the Admiral determined to retreat; and "on the 3d of April escaped through the Dardanelles, steering midway of "the channel, with a favorable and strong current.

"This escape, however," says Baines, "was only from destruction, but "by no means from serious loss and injury. In what instance in the whole "course of our naval warfare, have ships received equal damage in so "short a time as in this extraordinary enterprise? In detailing the extent "of this damage, we will take the ships in the order they descended. The "first had her wheel carried away, and her hull much damaged, but "escaped with the loss of only three men. A stone shot penetrated the "second, between the poop and quarter deck, badly injured the mizzen- "mast, carried away the wheel, and did other serious damage, killing and "wounding twenty men. Two shot struck the third, carrying away her "shrouds and injuring her masts; loss in killed and wounded thirty. The "fourth had her mainmast destroyed, with a loss of sixteen. The fifth had "a large shot, six feet eight inches in circumference, enter her lower deck; "loss fifty-five. The sixth not injured. The seventh, a good deal damaged, "with a loss of seventeen. The eighth had no loss. The ninth was so "much injured that, had there been a necessity for hauling the wind on "the opposite tack she must 'gone down;' her loss was eight. The tenth "lost twelve. The eleventh was much injured, with a loss of eight— "making a total loss in repassing the Dardanelles, of one hundred and "sixty-seven; and in the whole expedition two hundred and eighty-one, "exclusive of two hundred and fifty men who perished in the burning of "the Ajax.

"Such was the effect produced on the British fleet, sailing with a "favorable wind and strong current past the half-armed and half-manned "forts of the Dardanelles. Duckforth himself says, that had he remained "before Constantinople much longer—till the forts had been completely

"put in order—no return would have been open to him, and the unavoid-
"able sacrifice of the squadron must have been the consequence. Scarcely
"had the fleet cleared the Straits before it (the fleet) was reinforced with
"eight sail of the line; but, even with this vast increase of strength, the
"English did not venture to renew the contest. They had effected a most
"fortunate escape. General Jomini says that if the defence had been con-
"ducted by a more enterprising and experienced people, the expedition
"would have cost the English their whole squadron."*

Truly, if half-dilapidated batteries (worked probably by unpractised hands) could inflict these serious damages upon a fleet, *not* engaged in actual contest, by merely trying to *run by*, under the most favorable circumstances of wind and tide, what might not such batteries be capable of?

"In what instance," says Ad. Baines, "in the whole course of our naval
"warfare, have ships received equal damage in so short a time as in this
"extraordinary enterprise?"

It is to be remarked, however, that we have as yet had no fair instance of the power of modern *shell guns* from land batteries against ordinary ships of war. In the few direct contests which the Allies had with Russian fortifications, the modern armament does not appear to have existed; and where shells were thrown from guns, they appear to have been of inferior calibre. Yet the Russians with the shell-guns of their fleet blew up two Turkish frigates at Sinope, *in fifteen minutes.*

One of the main causes of inefficiency in coast batteries, which has given color to the idea that they may be passed, or even *attacked* with impunity, I conceive to be the want of *skill* and *care* in the use of the guns. The result is a prodigious smoke, and a prodigious throwing away of balls, and very little damage done. This has been, however, by no means a *peculiarity* of coast defences. The same system of random firing has hitherto prevailed, both in the use of small arms in land and of heavy ordnance in sea battles; nor has it occurred apparently to even the greatest masters of the art of war, to ask why, for one man wounded, or for one effective shot in a vessel's hull, so many thousands of shot should be thrown uselessly into the air.

But this question is *now* asked, both in the use of the soldier's rifled musket, and in the management of ships' guns, as well as of artillery of all kinds.

It is at last discovered that it is of more importance to teach the soldier to direct his piece with accuracy of aim, than to perform certain motions on parade with the precision of an automaton. The same idea is now infused into all the departments of military and naval science, and is a *necessary* result of the recent great improvements in the construction of arms. In short, the truth has at last become apparent that the old-fashione system of random firing, though perhaps like the "charge of the six hundred" at Balaklava, "bien magnifique, *n'est pas la guerre.*"

It is of the utmost importance that we should apply this principle to the management of our sea-coast batteries, and give it a practical effect. The *volunteers* of our cities will constitute *mainly*, in time of war, the

* Halleck, "Military Art and Science."

gunners of our forts and manipulators of our sea-coast guns. In time of war, they will probably be exercised in these duties. But it is most desirable that we should have at *all times* a body of gunners, practised in these exercises. The result would be, not only to give to our *citizens*, as well as citizen-soldiers, confidence in the defences provided for their security, but it would disseminate military knowledge, and an intelligent idea of the bearing and objects of the different defensive works. To carry out this idea, it would be desirable that there should be at each considerable seaport town, a sufficient garrison of *artillery* troops to aid in the instruction of the volunteers. In the present condition of the army *this* cannot be hoped, but perhaps it might, at least, be found practicable to detail an artillery officer or two for the purpose.

[E.]

On the relative value and *strength* of earthen and masonry revetted works, the following extracts will be read with interest.

The first is from the Report of Capt. George B. McLellan, 1st Cavalry, one of the "Military Commission to Europe."

"This would seem to be the proper place to notice a popular fallacy, "which, for a time at least, gained extensive credence. It was, that the "siege of Sebastopol proved the superiority of temporary (earthen) fortifi- "cations over those of a permanent nature. It is easy to show that it "proved nothing of the kind; but that it only proved that temporary "works in the hands of a brave and skillful garrison are susceptible of a "longer defence than was generally supposed. They were attacked as "field works never were before, and were defended as field works never had "been defended. The main difference between properly constructed per- "manent fortifications (intended to resist a siege) and temporary works, is "that the latter seldom present an insuperable obstacle against assault, "while the former always do. In addition, permanent works have a "better command over the adjacent country, and are more carefully and "perfectly planned. The masonry walls which render an assault impos- "sible, cannot be seen from the distance, and can be destroyed only by "establishing batteries on the crest of the glacis, or the edge of the ditch; "the earthen parapet alone being visible beyond that point, they may, un- "til the besiegers arrive there, be regarded in the same light as field works, "with the difference that the garrison are not harrassed by the necessity of "being constantly prepared to repel an assault.

"Now, in the siege of Sebastopol, the trenches of the besiegers never "reached the edge of the ditch; so that, had the fortification been a per- "manent one, the most difficult, slow, and dangerous part of the siege "remained to be undertaken, viz., the crowning of the covered way, the "establishment of the breach batteries, the descent and passage of the "ditch, and the assault of the breach; in other words, at the moment when "the weakness of the temporary works became apparent and fatal, the true "strength of the permanent defences would have commenced coming into "play."

"Assuming the progress of the attack to have been as rapid as it was "under existing circumstances, the besiegers, on the 8th of September, "would not yet have been in a condition to crown the covered way, the "siege would certainly have extended into the winter; and it may even be "doubted whether the place would eventually have fallen, until the Allies "were in sufficient force to invest the north as well as the south side."

These views are, I believe, fully sustained by the other commissioners, Majors Delafield of the Engineers, and Mordecai of the Ordnance Corps.

But a more remarkable confirmation is found in the recently published "Journal of the Operations of the Engineers" at the siege of Sebastopol, by the French Engineer-in-Chief, Gen. Niel, which I also extract.

It furnishes, at the same time, a simple and intelligible explanation of the extraordinary length of defence of that place.

"Struck by the length of the siege of Sebastopol, certain foreign offi-
"cers have expressed the opinion that masonry-revetted scarps are not of
"incontestable utility in fortified places."

"Sebastopol, a vast retrenched camp, defended by field fortifications of
"strong profile, derived its principal strength from an armament such as
"could only exist in an extensive maritime arsenal, and from a large army
"which always preserved its free communications with the interior of
"Russia."

"If the enceinte had been provided with good revetted scarps; if it
"had been necessary to breach these, and subsequently have been com-
"pelled to penetrate through difficult passages, in rear of which the heads
"of our columns would have met an army, Sebastopol would have been an
"impregnable fortress."

"When we compare, in effect, the works of attack at Sebastopol with
"those of an ordinary siege, we will see that on the 8th of Sept., 1855, the
"day of the last assault, we had only executed, after the greatest effort,
"the besieging works which precede the crowning of the covered way; we
"had not then, as yet, entered upon that period of the works of a siege
"which is the most difficult and the most murderous; and there was no
"occasion to engage ourselves in them, since the ditches and parapets of
"the enceinte were not insurmountable, as the sequel has proved."

"The difficulty consisted in conquering the Russian army upon a posi-
"tion prepared long beforehand for its defence, quite as much as in sur-
"mounting the material obstacle of the fortification."

"Our places of arms being established at thirty metres from the besieged
"works, we were able to choose our own time for action, and to throw
"ourselves unexpectedly upon the enemy when the fire of our artillery had
"forced him to shelter himself, up to the last minute, behind his numerous
"blindages; to have gone further would have been inviting the initiative
"in the attack on the part of the Russian army."

"The absence of scarp walls, which would have secured the place from
"escalade, did not exercise a less influence upon the defence; for the be-
"sieged were compelled to keep permanently at the gorges of the works,
"strong reserves, in readiness to repulse the assault, which they saw them-
"selves menaced with from the commencement of the siege."

"Finally, it can be remarked, that these reserves, which were decimated
"night and day by the concentric fire of our batteries, were able to issue
"out from the enceinte through wide debouches, without having to pass
"through the narrow defiles which are formed by the draw-bridges of re-
"vetted places; they were, then, a permanent threat for the besiegers, who
"were exposed to seeing their trenches unexpectedly invaded by the
"greater part of the Russian army."

"Neither side, consequently, was in a position analogous to that which "is presented in the siege of a fortified place, protected from insult by good "masonry scarps." (Note to page 443.)

And again, page 423, the same authority remarks (the italics are mine):

"Now, it (the Russian army) is no longer able to escape from the con- "centric fires of our batteries; for, *not being protected by masonry scarps*, "it is obliged constantly to keep united strong reserves, in order to "repulse the assault with which it is at every instant menaced."